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STARTING FROM THE CAMP AT BAALBEC.

Frontispiece.

See page 453.

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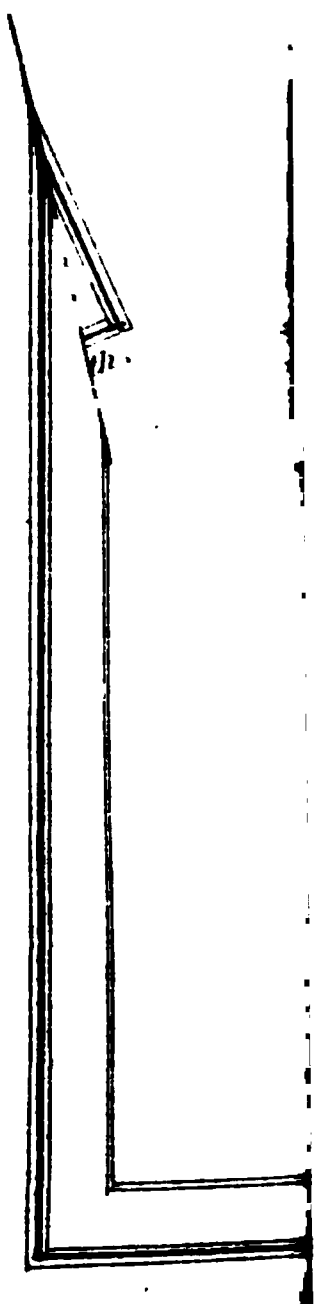
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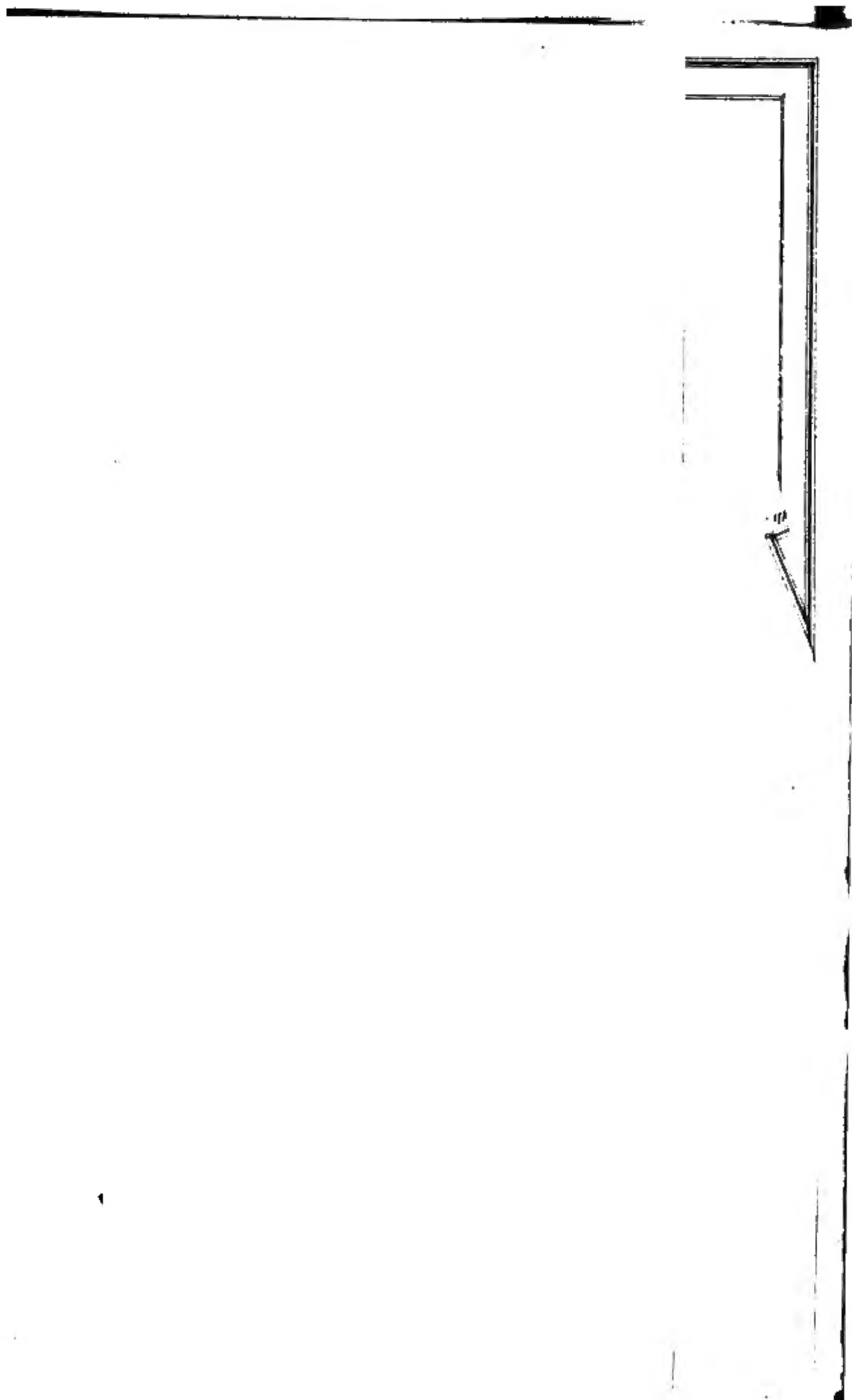
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STARTING FROM THE CAMP AT BAALBEC.

Frontispiece.

See page 455.





THE
RIDE THROUGH PALESTINE.

BY THE
REV. JOHN W. DULLES, D.D.

*ILLUSTRATED BY ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOUR
MAPS AND ENGRAVINGS.*

PHILADELPHIA :
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THE RIDE THROUGH PALESTINE.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST DAY IN THE HOLY LAND.

FAREWELL, now, to Egypt! Her Nile, her pyramids, her tombs, her temples, her obelisks, her fertile fields, her poor oppressed people, all dwell in our hearts. But we leave them, not reluctantly, since PALESTINE is before us.

Egypt's low shores sink beneath the horizon while our strong French steamship ploughs her way through the rolling blue of the Mediterranean, north-eastward toward the Land of Canaan. The sun sets, the night closes around us, and our motley company of passengers seek rest in sleep. The pilgrims to the holy places say a prayer, cross themselves, spread their rugs on the deck and lie down contentedly. The Mohammedans have gone through their after-sunset devotions, and now they smoke and talk till sleep overtakes them. The saloon-passengers are in no haste to retire, but by ten o'clock they too have gone to their cabins, and the ship is left to the seamen and the sea. We sleep, but through the hours of the night onward drives our vessel unceasingly to her port.

The morning of March 2, 1879, comes, and word passes through the ship that land is in sight. Soon we are on deck. Eager eyes look away to the east, and our hearts give a bound, and then beat swiftly, as we say to ourselves "Palestine! The Holy Land! Land of the Prophets! Land of Christ!" Yes, it is before us. The yellow sandhills stretch along the surf-beaten shore, and just where our ship points, crowning a rounded hillock, a town glistens white in the morning sun. It is Yâfa—Jaffa—Joppa. As we come nearer, the town rises before us with a beauty not born of fancy. The bowl-like hill on which it is built slopes toward the sea, so that its buildings rise step above step, each square house with its flat roof forming a step to that behind it. Nothing intervenes between the buildings and the water. All of Joppa is full in sight.

As we gaze we draw near, until our anchor drops and our steamship rides gently in the swell. All now is bustle and confusion. Native boats surround us, tossing on the waves which have little effect upon our great iron steamship. Their crews of vehement Arabs are all clamorous for employment. A boat is chosen, our luggage is lowered into it and we prepare to follow. But this is easier said than done. There is a good sea on, and the boat rises and falls at the ship's side with the waves. Descending the ladder, we watch the boat, and at a favoring moment jump into it. It is to be recommended to travelers that they jump into the boat rather than into the sea. In the latter case they risk a choice between drowning and being crushed against the ship's side. Our embarkation being suc-

JAFFA, THE MODERN JOPPA, FROM THE SOUTH.

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cessfully achieved, our boatmen pull away for the shore, cheering their toil with an Arabic refrain.

The landing at Joppa has a bad name, and deservedly. Properly speaking, harbor there is none. Ships anchor at a distance from the shore, near which there is a reef of rocks with a narrow opening through which row-boats can be pulled in moderate weather. If the weather be bad, the steamers do not stop, knowing that passengers cannot be landed. In this case the unfortunate voyagers are carried on to Acre or Beirût. It is no uncommon thing for boats to be dashed by the waves upon the rocks or to be upset, not a few lives being thus lost. As we neared the narrow rift in the reef our six oarsmen grew more emphatic in their utterances. The water dashed foaming against the rocks right and left, the boat bounded, the spray fell over us, but in we shot, and in a moment were in still water. The narrow basin is so thoroughly protected that in it little movement is felt. To reach the stone quay, and to climb up its side with the help of hands stretched out to us from the shore, took but little time, and we were landed in Joppa, whence Jonah took boat for the ship of Tarshish twenty-five hundred years ago.

The traveler in the East soon learns not to trust to the distant beauty of city and town. We had been through too many Egyptian towns to be surprised at finding Jaffa less fair within than from the ship's deck. Though not worse than most of the towns of Southern Syria, it is far from attractive to the European or American visitor. Narrow, crooked streets, without sidewalks but often with evil odors, rise in steps, with

broken stone pavements and not a little filth. Camels, mules and donkeys, noisy men and veiled women, boys and girls, push their way in a jumble through the main street. Yes, and here lie great bales of hides on their way to the tanner, as they lay, no doubt, eighteen hundred years ago, when the tanner who entertained Peter dwelt here. On right and left of the narrow way are the little open shops where the tradesmen display their goods, their customers standing in the street whilst making their purchases.

Following this main street northward, you soon come out by the gate—though no gate is there—into the suburb which is growing up on the north of the town. Houses here stand in gardens separated from each other by cactus-hedges, in pleasing contrast with the dark, dirty streets of the town.

Our stopping-place was at Howard's Hotel, an unpretending yet welcome house of entertainment, where pilgrims are made comfortable whilst tarrying at Joppa, and are fitted out with camping-material for their tours.

Joppa is one of the ancient cities of the world. The Roman historians Pliny and Strabo wrote of it. Long before their day—yes, seven centuries before Rome was founded—it was mentioned in the book of Joshua * as one of the cities given to Dan in the division of Canaan among the twelve tribes. Later it was noted as the seaport where ships landed goods for Jerusalem. Hither the beams for the temple of Solomon were brought from Sidon. It was from Joppa that Jonah sailed. In New-Testament times the good Dorcas lived here, and here she was restored to life at the

* Josh. xix. 46.

prayer of Peter. It was here that Peter was entertained by Simon the Tanner, and, on the housetop, had the vision which bade him understand that God had made all nations of one blood, and had provided one redemption for all men. The glorious fact of the brotherhood of man broke upon Peter in this town. You can read the story in the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

Joppa has often been destroyed by hostile armies, but always has been rebuilt, its relation to Jerusalem demanding a town at this point on the coast. It has been held successively by Phœnician, Jew, Greek, Roman, Christian crusader, Saracen and Turk. Its last siege was in 1799, when it was stormed by the French under Kleber, and its garrison inhumanly butchered in cold blood with the assent of Napoleon Bonaparte. Its population is now variously estimated at from eight to fifteen thousand.

We visited the house pointed out as that of Simon the Tanner. It stands by the water-side, and is a solid stone house of two stories, with a square, flat roof looking out over the water. The room on the first floor has been turned into a Moslem place of prayer—a mosque. It is bare and desolate. From the yard you can mount to the housetop, and, though you may be far from sure that this is the house at which the messengers from Cornelius knocked (since the building is a modern one), the narrative will become more real to you. No doubt it was much such a house as this, nor could it have stood far from where this house stands. Certainly, we read the story from the Bible with fresh zest while standing upon that housetop.

Travelers do not tarry long in Joppa. It is but the starting-point for tourists who come by sea. An outfit can be had here, but this we did not need. We had engaged our dragoman in Cairo, and had there contracted with him for the supply of all our wants for a journey of six or eight weeks.

The dragoman of the East was originally an interpreter (as the term signifies), but he has become the *factotum* of the traveler. In Cairo we chose Michael Abdou of Beirût, with his associate and cousin Michael Chaya, from the many men who desired to serve us. A contract was drawn up detailing all that the dragoman was to provide for us and the payments which we were to make him—so much in Joppa, so much in Jerusalem, and the remainder at the journey's close in Beirût. The agreement was written in English, and then translated into Arabic at the American consulate of Egypt, where the high contracting parties met and solemnly signed and sealed the two papers in the presence of the consul-general, whose official seal was also affixed. Two of us signed for the travelers. Mr. Van Dyke then signed for the dragomans, each of whom drew from some hidden recess of his robe his signet, inked it, and with it stamped his seal opposite his name. The Arabic copy was given to Abdou, the English copy to us. In case of disagreement each party was bound to submit to the decision of the nearest American consul.

Abdou and Chaya came with us from Egypt. They had telegraphed ahead for horses, tents and mules, and soon after our arrival the road in front of Howard's Hotel looked like a horse-market. Seven Presbyterian

ministers, whose theology was quite equal to their horsemanship (and that speaks well for the former), might have been seen putting horses, bay, sorrel, gray and black, through their paces—walking them, trotting them, cantering them, as knowingly as so many jockeys. So severe was their orthodoxy that it was not easy for untutored Arab horses to come up to their standard. However, it was decided to accept seven of them, and in due time the seven clergymen were mounted upon seven horses and off for a forty or fifty days' ride up and down Canaan.

Filing out of Jaffa by the road to Ramleh and Jerusalem, with their Syrian dragoman at their head, they made an imposing display of American Presbyterianism and American equestrianism. No doubt the suburban Jaffites were deeply impressed by the cavalcade. If they were not, the travelers were.

The way passes first amid the fruit-orchards for which Jaffa is justly famed, and which are shut off from the road by cactus-hedges or by stone walls. These orchards are kept fresh during the dry season by water raised by the Persian wheel and carried to the trees by little trenches reaching the roots of each tree. Water is found in abundance in the soil quite near the surface, and this is life to the trees. The righteous shall be "like a tree planted by the rivers (rivulets or canals) of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."* Such trees are those in the gardens about Joppa. The orange and lemon trees were now fragrant with blossoms, whilst

* Psalm i.

the golden fruit hung temptingly amid the lustrous foliage. The apricots and pomegranates were not yet in leaf.

In an hour or so the orange-groves were passed, and the way opened out upon a rolling prairie-land varied by gentle hills. The brown soil seemed to bear good crops of barley, lentils and wheat where it was under tillage, but much of it lay neglected and waste. On our right stretched a ridge of low hills. Over those hills and to the south lay the land of the Philistines. Before us and to the north, far and wide, stretched the plain until it met the mountains twenty miles away in the east. This was

"Sharon's dewy vale"

that we were crossing.

The sensation of a first ride over the Plain of Sharon in early spring is one not soon to be forgotten. The fields and banks at the roadside were brilliant with daisies, white and pink, with clusters of the graceful cyclamen and with anemones of brilliant crimson. The associations of the land clustered thick about us. We looked to the north, to the south and

ANEMONE CORONARIA.

to the east, and, drinking long draughts of inspiration from every quarter, cried "Glorious! glorious! the

Holy Land! the Land of Promise!" and praised God for the privilege of treading the soil made sacred by the footsteps of prophets and apostles. The desire of years had been granted.

The flowers constantly tempted us to dismount and gather them. The crimson anemone was especially attractive. May it not be "the rose of Sharon"? It is agreed by scholars that the "rose of Sharon" mentioned in Solomon's Song* is some other flower than our rose, and this brilliant anemone has been awarded the title by modern travelers. Is the award a just one? No one knows.

During the long dry season from April to the close of October this plain lies parched and brown, but when the winter rains sink into the thirsty ground the grass revives, the grain-fields smile, and myriads of flowers soon cover not only the fields, but the stony hillsides and rocky ridges.

An hour and a half away from Joppa, the little village of Beit Dejân, "House of Dagon," recalls the Bible stories of the Philistines and their god. On the tops of the little hills on our right, every mile or so, a stone guard-house tells us that though no Philistines now prowl behind the ridge, plunderers and robbers are not unknown, as the traveler sometimes learns to his cost. A pretty gazelle grazing in the fields lifts its head as we pass, but is too far away to fear us, nor would we harm the graceful creature if we could. In the road we pass donkeys led by Syrian muleteers, camels laden with boxes and bales for Jerusalem, and peasants bound for the villages by the way. Yet the

* Chap. ii. 1.

number of passers is small when we remember that this is the highway to the Holy City—in fact, the

only road for wheeled vehicles in all Palestine. Not a wheeled vehicle did we see, however. Those who have traveled by coach between Joppa and Jerusalem are not loud in their praises of the road. They would appreciate it more highly if they had

GAZELLE OF SYRIA.

first known the average Syrian road. But the afternoon advances, and now what are these solemn, gray, silvery-leaved trees gathered in gardens? These are olive trees, and we are amid the olive-groves that surround the town of Ramleh. We catch sight of the "White Tower of Ramleh," and turn our horses' heads toward it. This is a notable ruin of a Moslem building, called in Arabic the Jamia el-Abiad, or "The White Mosque." It may have been built by the crusaders and converted into a mosque by the Mohammedans. But, whether built by the followers of Christ or of Mohammed, it is a beautiful and noble ruin. It is surrounded by walls now broken, though solidly built of stone. Under the ground of the enclosure are great vaulted rooms—for what purpose constructed it is hard to decide, though easy to guess. The broken tower yet stands one hundred and twenty feet high, and may be ascended by a winding stairway

of one hundred and twenty-six steps. From the ruined top a glorious view is had. To the west stretches Sharon, with the glitter of the Mediterranean beyond. Southward lies Philistia's rolling plain. In the east rise the Judean hills, with the rugged mountains beyond. To the north, farther than eye can reach, lies the Plain of Sharon, whilst at our feet nestles the village of Ramleh, and a little to the north the minaret of the mosque at Lydda reflects the rays of the declining sun.

WHITE TOWER OF RAMLEH.

The lengthening shadows warned us to tear ourselves away from this charming view. We found a group of travelers encamped at Ramleh, which is a town of three thousand inhabitants, but we were not to rest here.* Turning our horses northward, we left the highway to Jerusalem, and journeyed by the rougher road that leads to it through Lydda. It was

* Tradition locates Arimathea at Ramleh, but the evidence that links the two places is too defective to permit us to assent to it as a fact.

our purpose to go to Jerusalem by the less-traveled and longer but more interesting route through Beth-horon, Gibeon and Mizpeh.

It is less than an hour's ride from Ramleh to Lydda, much of the road being narrow and shut in by hedges which enclose orchards, gardens and tilled fields. Figs, olives and mulberries are cultivated, and grain is planted among the trees.

Nearing Lydda, now "Ludd," we turned to the right without entering the town, and in a broad, open meadow found our five tents pitched, the mules picketed and the cook busily at work preparing dinner for the howadjis. From the pole of our dining-tent waved the American flag, never fairer in our eyes than here on our first camping-ground in Palestine. Nor was the call to dinner unwelcome, nor the dinner itself unworthy of the flag that floated over it or of the appetites of those who sat under its folds. Indeed, the event proved that in our cook, Yakoob (Jacob), we had a treasure. Your cook is not the least important member of your company in the tour of Palestine. Dinner over, we united in reading, singing and prayer, giving thanks to God for his goodness, and turned into our little camp-beds to be lulled to sleep by the music of packs of yelping jackals.

CHAPTER II.

FROM LYDDA TO JERUSALEM.

THE breaking morn found our camp astir. The muleteers were busy with the mules and horses. Chaya was preparing to strike the tents. Antone had the table in readiness, and Yakoob's kitchen sent forth appetizing odors. Anticipation makes sleep light. The pilgrims were up betimes, and after breakfast and prayers mounted their horses to follow their dragoman into Lydda, and thence up the Judean hills.

The Arabic "Ludd" is nearer in sound to the original "Lod," of which the Old Testament speaks as a city of Benjamin, than is our modern "Lydda." To Bible-readers its most interesting association is the coming hither of Peter to preach, his healing Eneas, and his being called, when here, to go to Joppa on the death of the much-loved Dorcas.* It is now a town of two thousand people, with houses built of cut stone, but wearing a tumble-down look that bespeaks decay. The people work in the basements, while the upper chambers crumble into ruins. In A. D. 415 a famous Christian Council was held here, and high debate was had with the heretical Pelagius. But the chief glory of Lydda is that the famous St. George—he who slew the dragon—was born here and is buried here.

* Acts of the Apostles, chap. ix.

St. George was a Christian soldier and martyr of the third century, having been put to death in Nicomedia when Diocletian was emperor of Rome. How surprised would this faithful Roman soldier have been, had he been told that he would become the patron saint of the Christians of far-away Britain, then inhabited by heathen savages! Yet so it is. Lydda is thus closely

LUDD, THE MODERN LYDDA.

linked to England. The church of St. George, built over the tomb of the saint, was destroyed by the Mohammedans, and is pictured as a ruin in our engraving; but it has recently been rebuilt by Russian alms, for he is the patron saint of Russia also, so that the grave of the martyr has now a goodly covering. We were shown through the church by a Greek priest, and

were permitted also to descend to the vault and view the marble tomb of this good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Leaving the church and winding through the streets of Lydda, stone-paved and with a gutter in the middle, we soon were in the open country with our faces to the hills east of us. It was not long before we learned that travel in Palestine has its prose as well as its poetry. The road to the Upper Beth-horon astonished us. We had not then learned what a Syrian road could be. First we descended and crossed the bed of a stream, and then ascended, and ascended steadily all day. Half-ruined villages crowned the hills to right and left. Gimzo, now Jimzu (a town once held by the Philistines), was passed. The road grew more rough; it became a lane of stones and rocks. And now the thunder rattled and crashed, and the rain began to beat fiercely on us. We hastily donned our waterproofs and braved the storm. When the rain held up we stopped to lunch in a muddy ploughed field, greatly to the enjoyment of the people of the neighboring village of Suffa, who stared at us with an apparent determination to miss nothing that the howadjis might do.

But we had been passing over the best of the road. Beit-Ur et-Tahta, the "Beth-horon the Nether" of 1 Chron. vii. 24, was passed, and we found the way to the Upper Beth-horon rugged indeed. Stones great and small, with rocks and mud, abounded. At times the track was up the face of the rock, in which rude steps were cut to aid our horses' feet. But we pushed ahead bravely—indeed, there was nothing else to do—and before sunset had gained the high promontory of rock on which stands Beit-Ur el-Fokah, the "Beth-

horon the Upper" of 2 Chron. viii. 5, two thousand feet above the level of our camp-ground at Lydda.

A little back of the headland, in a stone-walled field below the village, we found our tents pitched and ready to receive us. Glad were we of their shelter from wind and rain.

Beit-Ur el-Fokah is beyond question the Beth-horon the Upper which was fortified by Solomon to command the road to the low country. It is a deeply interesting spot from its connection with the great victory won by Joshua over the Amorites. The story will be recalled—how the Gibeonites deceived the leader of the Israelites into a covenant of peace, their envoys, with ragged shoes, mouldy bread and cracked bottles, pretending to have come from a far country, when they really lived but eight miles from Joshua's camp; how they were assailed by their confederate clans for their desertion; how they sent off in hot haste for help from their new allies against their former friends; how Joshua by a forced march reached Gibeon, attacked the Amorites with fiery impetuosity and drove them westward up to the height on which Beth-horon stands, then over the hill and down by Ajalon to the plains. If you do not recall the story you may read it in the tenth chapter of Joshua. Deeply interesting is it to stand on the bold headland, which like a promontory juts westward, to look down into the valley south of the promontory along which the routed Amorites fled, and to see afar off Yâlo or Ajlun, the Ajalon of the old-time story. Somewhere hereabout did the gallant leader of God's host stand. The sun shone in the east above Gibeon, for it was probably now drawing near to

noon; the moon was faint in the west. The foes of Israel were swiftly fleeing down the vale. Shall the coming night rob the victors of the fruits of victory? Inspired from above to the act of faith, Joshua cried in the sight of Israel—

“‘Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon,
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.’
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had
avenged themselves upon their enemies.” *

The rainfall commended us to the kind regards of the Beth-horonites, who connected our coming with the coveted showers, saying that we had brought them rain. However, we did not regret the cessation of the downfall at evening. We visited the little town, which is built of square-cut stone from older edifices, and is poor enough. Climbing to the flat roof of the house of the sheikh, we had a glorious view over the hills of Judah down to the Plain of Sharon. Every hill and vale seemed to reflect Bible history. Joshua and his men became more real as we looked down into the very valley over which they chased the kings of Hebron and Jerusalem with their confederates. It was a satisfaction after coming up this valley (now the Merj Ibn Omeir) that we were not called upon to follow the Amorites or any naughty people down that rough way that night. Much better did it seem to dine, unite in evening worship and turn into our camp-beds.

With the morning we revisited the town, and, going out to the point of the mountain, again enjoyed the

* Josh. x. 12, 13.

glorious prospect. Then mounting our horses, we turned our faces toward Gibeon, Mizpeh and Jerusalem. Of the road little can be said that is to its credit. In fact, were we to pronounce the way detestable, vile, execrable, not one of its myriads of rocks and stones, over which our horses slid, stumbled and groped, would utter a word in contradiction of the epithets. Yet when Paul was sent by night from Jerusalem to Antipatris a stone-paved military road wound over and down these mountains. The hoofs of the steeds of his mail-clad Roman guard clattered over the well-laid pavement from the Sacred City to the plains, but now their route is traced only by the upturned slabs and broken fragments of the old way. Yet the road can be clearly traced.

In two hours the village of El-Jib—the Arabic equivalent of Gibeon—rose before us on a gentle hill. Descending into a valley which encircles the hill of Gibeon, and then ascending, we reached the town in less than an hour more.

If Gibeon in the days of Joshua was “a great city, as one of the royal cities,” it is far from being a royal city now. True, its houses bear marks of antiquity, but they are old without the traits that make the old venerable. Solidly built, square, flat-roofed, separated by narrow alleys, they did not tempt us to tarry. Yet the situation of the town is noble. Its hill is rounded and distinct, looking down on all sides on fruitful fields and orchards. The limestone rocks lie in horizontal strata, as if terraced by the hand of man, each step being clean cut and from six to ten feet high. Adjoining the village on the south is a broad surface, appa-

rently artificially leveled, now planted with olive trees. We fancied that it was here that the tabernacle stood and the altar, when Solomon offered at a high festival a thousand burnt-offerings.* It was at that time that the Lord appeared to Solomon, in this very Gibeon, in a dream by night, and said, "Ask what I shall give thee;" and here he received the boon of wisdom which he craved.† Soon after this the altar found its permanent home in the temple built by the young king at Jerusalem.

But where is that "Pool of Gibeon" where the twelve men of Abner's army and the twelve of Joab's army "played" before the commanders of the two Israelitish factions in so odd a manner? "They caught every one his fellow by the beard," says the historian, "and thrust his sword into his fellow's side, so they fell down together. Wherefore that place was called the 'place of strong men,' which is in Gibeon."‡ Is there any such pool? Yes. Go down the eastern slope of the hill, and there you find the reservoir and the field in which this bloody play introduced the battle which crushed the family of Saul and made David king of all Israel.

But what is the tower which crowns the lofty summit a couple of miles away to the south, commanding all the country round? That is Neby Samwîl (Prophet Samuel), the Mizpeh where the grand old Samuel gathered the people together to resist and to defeat their oppressors, the Philistines.§ There too was the first king of the Jews elected, and Saul saluted by the as-

* 1 Kings iii. 4.

† 1 Kings iii. 5-14.

‡ 2 Sam. ii. 13-16.

§ 1 Sam. vii. 5-12.

sembled men of Israel with shouts of "Long live the king!"*

To this summit and tower we turn our horses, first descending and passing amid the fields and orchards that surround the conical hill of Gibeon, and then ascending until we reach the hilltop, three thousand feet above the sea. On it clusters a hamlet, with great basins or tanks excavated out of the solid rock, arches of ancient stone, and every mark of an old-time town. In the centre of the hamlet and at the highest point rises a church built by the crusaders. We mount to its roof; we ascend its tower and look forth upon one of the noblest views—in itself, and still more in its associations—that the world can afford. Gibeon, Bethel, Ramah, Gibeah of Saul, the Plain of Sharon, the mountains of Moab, lie north, west and east, whilst to the south the towers of Jerusalem now first break upon our sight, with Bethlehem beyond.

We are told that Richard Cœur de Lion, in the crusading days, advanced from Ajalon and Beth-horon to this height, where he might have gazed down upon Jerusalem. Instead, however, of lifting his eyes toward it, burying his face in his armor, he uttered with deep emotion a prayer characteristic of the warrior and the crusader: "Ah, Lord God, I pray that I may never see the Holy City if I may not rescue it from the hands of thine enemies!" But we hesitated not to look, and to look long and earnestly. Whilst we stood and gazed a rising gust from the west swept eastward over plain and hill. Black clouds gathered and rolled over us, clothing the sky in darkness and enveloping in their

* I Sam. x. 24.

folds the old church on which we stood. The big drops fell, driving us within the tower. The rain-rush closed in our view. Soon the clouds passed, the sun shone out again, and the buildings of Jerusalem glittered in its rays. "To Jerusalem! to Jerusalem!" was the cry. Our horses were brought from their shelter under arched ways, the sheikh of the village was paid for his polite attentions, and we mounted, eager to reach the Holy City, now so near.

Down the steep hillside, through a narrow rocky valley, up again, over a plain, by the Tombs of the Judges—which we enter and briefly survey—we go, and soon the French and Russian hospices appear. Our horses seem ready for a gallop, and on we press. The venerable wall is in front of us. We turn to the right, and just outside of the western gate of the sacred city catch sight of our camp. We are without the walls of Jerusalem, but on the ridge of Mount Zion.

CHAPTER III.

JERUSALEM ON THE NORTH.

IF there be a spot so engrossing as to make the wanderer forget his loved ones at home, I have yet to find it. Even Jerusalem, with all its wealth of sacred interest, has not that power. No sooner had we dismounted and given our horses to the muleteers than, with one accord, we turned toward the gate of the city that we might find our banker and secure the letters for which we hoped.

Our camp was hard by the Bâb el-Khulîl, the "Hebron Gate" in its Arabic title, but known to travelers from the West as the Jaffa Gate. It is just north of the citadel, in the middle of the western wall of the city, and passes under a heavy square tower. Entering from the north, you turn sharp to the east within the tower, and after a few steps over the rough stone pavement are within the walls of "El-Kuds," The Holy. You may have to use a little agility in dodging the donkeys, camels, pilgrims and Arabs thronging the passage. Nor, when within, does this necessity cease, for the streets are narrow, ill-paved, and just here apt to be filled with a two-footed and a four-footed crowd of a character most motley, not to say unsavory. But the brilliant novelty of the scene makes amends for all this. We press our way

WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

1861

1901

down the descending slope of David street, turn up Christian street, and soon reach the office of the Berghems, to receive with gladness full packages of home letters. Thankful for good news from a far land, and having an hour or two of daylight still remaining, we improve it by a visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Eusebius, who was born at Cæsarea A. D. 264, tells us that Constantine, the first Christian emperor of Rome, having established Christianity as the state religion, caused a search to be made for the sacred places at Jerusalem, and that in the diggings carried forward the rock-hewn grave of Christ was found. Others tell us that Helena, the mother of the emperor, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and discovered the cross on which the Saviour died, which was identified by miraculous testimony. The emperor's discovery has received little credence; that of the pious empress still less from disinterested scholars. A noble church, however, was built over the sacred spot believed to be the sepulchre of Christ, which was dedicated in the year of our Lord 336. This church was destroyed by the Persians A. D. 614, but another was erected upon the same spot within twenty years. Four hundred years later this building had become a wreck through fire and pillage by the Moslems, but it was rebuilt A. D. 1055. It was to recover this precious site that the wars of the crusaders were waged, vast masses of men moving from Europe into Asia to rescue the grave of Christ from the grasp of the cruel and unbelieving Saracens. Hundreds of thousands died by the way; but in the year 1099 the crusaders entered

the dome of the Sepulchre, the goal for which they had so long and painfully striven, barefooted and singing psalms of praise to God.

During the eight centuries that have since rolled over Palestine this ancient church has suffered by violence and by fire, but it has as often been restored, and still stands, scarred without, yet rich within in the gifts of princes, and richer in the associations of fifteen hundred years of devotion.

Whether the grave of Christ and the Golgotha on which he died could possibly lie beneath the roof of this church has long been hotly debated by antiquaries. The weight of evidence seems to me to be against it. So judge many most sound and learned students. Yet there are not lacking wise men who believe that the spot covered by this church lay beyond the city-walls when Pilate was Roman governor of Judæa, and so might have been the place where our Lord "suffered without the gate." Whether it actually *was* that place would still remain to be proved were this point admitted. There are those who hold that there is reason to believe this also, and that this is of a truth the place where the Lord was laid in the tomb of Joseph.

If it be asked where the crucifixion took place, and where our Lord was buried if not at the spot marked by this venerable tradition, I reply that I cannot tell. For wise reasons the site is not made known to us. Yet, for one, my preference is for the rounded, skull-like knoll just without the northern wall of Jerusalem and over against the Damascus Gate. This spot was first suggested by our countryman Fisher Howe, and

ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, FACING
THE SOUTH.

has seemed highly probable to many travelers of intelligence. It is now occupied by a Moslem burial-place.

Leaving Christian street by a narrow alley, you pass under a vault, go down a few steps, and enter a small open square paved with stone and surrounded by buildings. Before you, and facing south, are the façade and door of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The church looks like an old friend, so often have you seen it in print or photograph, but when you enter, its *interior* is a surprise. That is so full of chapels, shrines and holy places that it can neither be painted nor described. To attempt to give any idea of it by words were labor wasted. It must be seen to be understood.

Entering at the low gateway in the transept of the church, you pass the Turkish guard posted there to keep the peace between the adherents of the Greek and Latin churches. Just before you, set in the floor, is a marble slab protected by a railing. Beneath this slab, you are told, lies the stone on which our Lord's body was laid for anointing for burial. Going onward, you pass into the rotunda, a circular, domed room two hundred feet in circumference, with piers supporting the clerestory and dome. In the middle of this rotunda stands that about which the whole complicated pile of buildings has grown up—the Chapel of the Angel and of the Tomb. This chapel is a stone building, its rear surmounted by a crown-shaped dome, standing within the church and beneath its grand dome. You may disbelieve the traditions which fix here the place of the cross and sepulchre, but a hush

comes over your spirit as you stand before the chapel enclosing the spot which has been held so sacred for fifteen centuries. Hundreds of thousands of crusaders cast away property, home, ease, life, everything, to rescue this tomb from the grasp of the infidel Moslems.

**"CHAPEL OF THE TOMB," UNDER THE DOME OF THE CHURCH OF
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.**

Go within. The first apartment is called the "Chapel of the Angel," for here, it is said, the angel sat upon the stone rolled away from the grave. Pass through the low door at its end and you are in a little stone chamber, with one side occupied by a marble-clad bench raised two feet above the floor. Under the marble slab is the

BIRKET EI-HUMMAM, THE POOL OF HAZEKIAH.

tomb. Over it hang lamps of silver and gold. There is just room for yourself and the two pilgrims who are kneeling and imprinting kisses on the stone. Withdraw into the small antechamber through which you entered, and stand on one side of it. As you then look within, the tomb has all the appearance of one of the rock-sepulchres with which the hills of the city are pierced. It will not hurt your soul to remember that the Son of God was laid in a grave after he had died for you.

But as you turn away, and, wandering around the utterly impossible gathering together of sacred spots into this one church,* feel your disgust arising, you will cry, "He is not here; he is risen."

A little distance south-west of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and in the midst of houses, is the noble reservoir now known by Franks as the Pool of Hezekiah. You look right down into it from the back window of the well-known bookstore of Shephira. The natives call it the Birket el-Hummâm el-Batrak, "Pool of the Patriarch's Bath." It is a stone-walled tank two hundred and forty feet long and one hundred and forty-four feet broad, and is fed by a conduit bringing to it water from the Birket Mamilla, the upper Pool of Gihon, lying west of the Jaffa Gate and outside of the city. That it is the Pool Amygdalon, or Lower Pool, of Josephus seems probable. From its size it must have held an important place in the water-supply of

* In addition to the tomb of Christ; you are shown the place of his scourging, of his crucifixion, of his appearing to Mary Magdalene, and of the finding of the true cross by Helena; also Adam's tomb, the place of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac, etc., etc.

Jerusalem, but it is now neglected and impure, and only serves to convey water to certain baths. Late in the summer it sometimes becomes dry, but it was well filled by a stream of water pouring into it at the time of our visit in early March. In 2 Kings xx. 20 we read that Hezekiah "made a pool and a conduit, and brought the water into the city;" and it is quite probable that this is the pool made by the pious king, the water being brought into the city by an underground channel, that it might not be destroyed by the Assyrians in their attacks on Jerusalem.

A visit to the consul of the United States, the Rev. J. G. Willson, by whom we were most kindly received, closed the day, and we repassed by the Jaffa Gate to our camp, where we slept quietly through the stormy night, guarded by soldiers detailed for the purpose by the Turkish governor.

March 6th opened clear and cool, inviting us to a "walk about Zion to tell the towers thereof." But alas for Zion! Its glory has departed. Its princes are no more. Its palaces have disappeared. Its towers are crumbled. Its temple has been cast down and swept from the summit of Moriah. Only memories are left, but these are precious. Even the stones of Jerusalem have voices that speak to our hearts. Did not Jesus here live and walk and suffer?

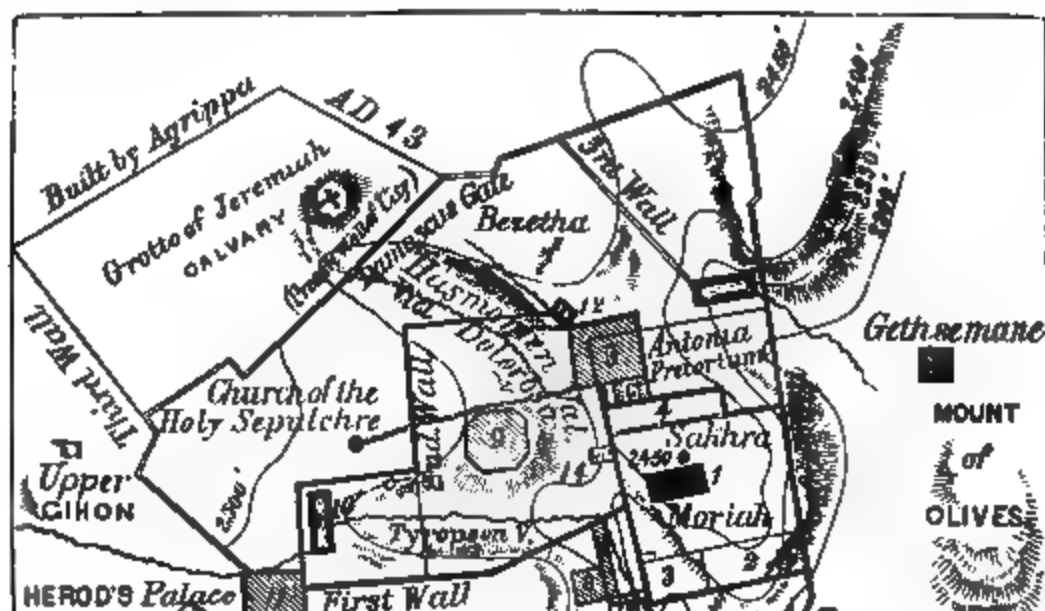
Let us look upon the Jerusalem that dwells on the sacred hills trodden by Solomon, by David, by Isaiah, by Christ.

We entered by the Bâb el-Khulîl, as before, and, turning to the left, climbed over a loose stone parti-

PLAN OF ANCIENT JERUSALEM

Drawn after Ordnance Survey by Captain Wilson

The map shows a possible location of Calvary (over what is now called the Grotto of Jeremiah), the Via Dolorosa, as it would be in that case, the Castle Antonia and the Prætorium, Herod's Palace, Aceldama, and also the traditional site of the Holy Sepulchre and the traditional Via Dolorosa. The waving lines represent the approximate lay of the rock, the figures showing the height in feet above the Mediterranean



REFERENCES

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| 1. Temple of Solomon, | 8. Agrippa's Palace. |
| 2. Palace of Solomon, } Herod's Temple | 9. Acra. |
| 3. Added on by Herod, } | 10. Pool Amygdalon, or Pool of Hezekiah. |
| 4. The Tower Baris or Antonia | 11. Herod's Castle and Palace |
| 5. Antonia (The Castle). | 12. Bethesda (?). |
| 6. Cloisters joining Antonia to Temple | 13. Bridge built by Herod. |
| 7. Xystus. | 14. Lower City. |

tion-wall into a vacant lot, and so reached the interior face of the wall of the city. By a narrow flight of stairs we gained the ledge just below the summit of the battlemented wall, and followed this shelf-like ledge around, by the north and east, to the Damascus Gate. Sometimes we descended by stone steps, and again ascended to the wall-top. Anon we crossed the flat roofs of houses, keeping a sharp lookout not to step through the holes which serve as chimneys, and then up by the wall once more, and so on to the Damascus Gate. The wall averages forty feet in height, and is in fair condition, yet could not for an hour withstand modern artillery. It was in places a ticklish walk, a little trying to nerves not used to this style of pathway, yet full of exciting interest. Looking down upon the city, we could see that Zion rose in the south-west above the other portions of Jerusalem, with valleys on its west, south, east and north-east. When fortified with an encircling wall it was a stronghold calling for the hottest valor of David's best soldiers to carry it by storm. Though the valleys are to a great degree filled by the ruins of many an overthrow and the rubbish of centuries, yet from the city-wall you see that between Zion and Acra, to its north, there is a depression which runs first east and then south-east, opening into the Kidron ravine by Siloam. This was the "Tyropœon." Between Acra and Moriah another valley sinks southward, and unites with the Tyropœon. This is the Valley of the Cheesemongers, or Hasmonean Valley.* Be-

* This valley was partially filled by the Maccabees, who cut down the summit of Acra that its fort might not command the temple on Moriah. This branch is held by some scholars to be the true Tyropœon valley. The subject is one much debated by topographers.

yond this depression rises the thrice-sacred Moriah, where Abraham laid Isaac on the altar, and where Solomon's temple rose. Its summit is now crowned by the Kubbet es-Sakhara, or "Dome of the Rock," known to us as the Mosque of Omar, the second holiest spot of the world to the Moslem.

EXTERIOR OF THE DAMASCUS GATE, JERUSALEM

From the summit of the tower over the Damascus Gate the view is at its best. Not only do you look down upon the northern portion of Jerusalem, and across to the "Upper City" of Zion to the south,

but beyond Moriah upon the rounded summits of Olivet in the east, and off to a wide reach of hallowed ground, hill and valley, on the north.

Descending by the interior stairway, and taking a good look at the massive stonework in the base of the tower, a relic of Jewish sovereignty, we went out at the Damascus Gate, and continued our walk without the wall.

A respectable bridle-path skirts the city on the north, affording a way for pilgrims from the camping-ground at the Jaffa Gate to Olivet and the points of interest in the east, without treading the foot-torturing and nose-offending streets. The wall is here rendered more imposing by being built upon a rock laid bare by excavation. On your left is the opposing face of the cut, with the so-called "Grotto of Jeremiah" penetrating the face of the hill, and a Moslem burying-place occupying its rounded top. Low down in the cliff beneath the city-wall, east of the Damascus Gate, is a door by which you enter the cavernous quarries from which were cut the stones for house, palace and temple long ago; but we will not now stop to view them. Walking to the north-east angle of the wall, we turn, and have Olivet in full view across the narrow Kidron (or Kedron) gorge. The depth of this ravine and its narrowness are striking, serving to bring into full relief the ascent beyond. Up the slope the eye rises, and rests tenderly upon the three rounded summits of the Mount of Olives. It follows the pathways—which must always have been where now they cross or wind around the heights—and the heart in stillness echoes reverently the thought, "Those paths, those

very paths that cross that very Olivet, were trodden by my Saviour's feet!"

Nestling at the foot of Olivet, the traditional Garden of Gethsemane catches your eye, with its venerable trees and stiff enclosing wall. Beyond it, down the valley, you see the Pillar of Absalom, easily recognized, and beyond it the Tomb of Zechariah and the village of Silwân or Siloam.

Your pathway runs just under the eastern wall of

ST. STEPHEN'S GATE, OR BÂB SITTÿ MARIAM, JERUSALEM.

Jerusalem, passing ruined pools, once centres of life, but now neglected—"broken cisterns that hold no water"—until you reach St. Stephen's Gate, the eastern port of exit from the city. By the natives it is known as the Bâb Sittÿ Mariam (Gate of the Lady Mary). It is quite an imposing portal; lions carved in relief upon

the wall, with marvelous tails and impossible mouths, grimly face you as you enter. You may pass the Turkish sentinels without perturbation, for they are innocent fellows in daylight, though not proof against temptation to theft by night; and no wonder, for their pay from the wretched government which they are forced to serve means starvation for their families and near starvation for themselves.

The way across the city to the Jaffa Gate is easily found. It is the most trodden walk of pilgrims, for it leads you over the famed "Via Dolorosa," "the sad pathway" which tradition says was trodden by Jesus when he bore the cross to Calvary.

Soon after passing the gate you see on your right a neat enclosure, entering which you find the pretty church of St. Anna, in whose underground crypt is a tomb held by its French Catholic priests to be that of the mother of the Virgin Mary. It is not needful to believe this, nor would it be a matter of grave importance did you believe it. But a few steps farther on is something worth noting. The door in the wall on your left is locked, but you find a place where you can clamber over the wall. Within the enclosure are heaps of rubbish and a rank growth of weeds on the margin of a huge oblong reservoir, a water-pool of ancient Jerusalem now almost dry. This is the Birket Israil, popularly known as the Pool of Bethesda. The reader will recall the account in John (chap. v.) of the pool "called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches," in which lay "a great multitude of impotent folk, blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." Dr. Edward Robinson argued for the Foun-

tain of the Virgin as the true Bethesda, but the Birket Israil has claims not to be summarily set aside, even

TRADITIONAL POOL OF BETHESDA, JERUSALEM.

though they may not be conceded. Its entire length is three hundred and sixty feet, its breadth one hundred and twenty feet and its depth eighty feet. But this depth does not appear to the eye, as the pool is half filled with rubbish. Captain Warren discovered an aqueduct leading from it, probably to the Kidron Valley. Even after the rains we had had, the pool was nearly dry. Its feeders are blocked and its walls

broken. It partakes of the desolation that wraps Jerusalem as a pall. It was evidently originally a natural depression north of Moriah, which has been converted by walls into a reservoir; the date of this work, if ascertained, would aid in deciding whether it could have been the pool whose name it bears. But this question, like many others that are asked by the traveler in Jerusalem, awaits settlement.

STREET IN MODERN JERUSALEM.

Leaving the Pool of Bethesda, you follow the street westward. The streets of Jerusalem are narrow, closely walled by dark houses, often arched and built over, and without sidewalks. The pavement is formed of rounded stones, so unevenly laid, and in wet weather so slippery, that you must pay attention to every step you take. In the bazaars filth and mud add to the annoyance. As you pick your way, you meet camels

laden with huge sacks or boxes, almost filling the narrow street; it will be well that you take care that these burdens do not strike you. And take care, too, to get out of the way of that string of mules, and do not be so intent on escaping the mules as not to dodge around these kneeling camels, growling their displeasure at the loads laid on them. The pedestrian in Jerusalem must have his eyes about him.

In many of the streets the filth is odious beyond description, garbage being thrown into them, and the degradation made visible is most offensive. They make you recall the words of Jeremiah: "All they that pass by hiss at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?"

Yet, after all, there is an attraction in these streets, their life is so novel, their associations are so tender, sacred or painful. True, the old city has been replaced by one more modern, but these are the streets of Jerusalem. The Castle of Antonia stood at the left of this way over which we are walking, and where now are the Turkish barracks. The arch just before you, over this street, is an old Roman arch. Step into the neat French Catholic church on your right, attached to the convent of the Sisters of Zion, and one of the sisters will show you the remainder of the arch and a Roman portal that once led into a great Roman dwelling. This is the "Ecce Homo (*Behold the man!*) Arch." The tradition is that from this arch the thorn-crowned Saviour was shown to the Jews to be rejected by them. The traditional Via Dolorosa here begins, or rather it began at the Turkish barracks which you have just

passed, where it is believed stood Pilate's Prætorium. It is that "sorrowful way" over which our Lord is supposed to have borne the cross from the Roman Prætorium to Calvary. It follows the streets of the modern city from the Turkish barracks to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Pilgrims from every land come to tread this mournful path and to pray at each station, mayhap bearing on their shoulders wooden crosses in

GREEK CHAPEL. IN THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, JERUSALEM.

imitation of the Saviour's burden. Not thus do we most truly follow in his footsteps! He follows Christ most truly who lives as Christ lived—like Christ, ever doing those things which please the Father.

As you descend to the old Tyropœon Valley and ascend to Acra, you are shown the Stations of the

Cross—where our Lord sunk under the cross, where he met his mother, where Simon of Cyrene began to bear the cross, and so on—until you reach the spot where he was nailed to the cross, within the existing Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and where, on the cross, he cried, “It is finished!” and gave up the ghost.

It may be asked how one is affected by these traditional tales on this sacred ground. On myself the effect was twofold. The utter impossibility of believing these traditions, their puerility, their almost blasphemous untruth, contradicting as they do the commonest laws of evidence, tended to beget a feeling of disgust. Amid these pious lies you are tempted to doubt or to forget that the hills of Jerusalem are thickly sown with unquestionable memories of solid truth. But, turning from these Greek and Romish legends, you recall the profoundly sacred verities of the place, and you are penetrated by the thought that in this very Jerusalem, not far from where you stand, the Man of Sorrows was rejected, was spit upon, was scourged and bore his cross. You do not need to know just the spot upon which he died for you; perhaps it is better not to know it.

The dweller at home may rest assured of one thing: that, precious as is the privilege of visiting the Holy Land, it is not needful for the *spiritual* perception of Christ as our Saviour. In Palestine reality is given to his humanity rather than to his divinity.

TOPOGRAPHY OF JERUSALEM.

1 Mount Zion — 2 Moriah. — 3 Temple — 4 Antonia — 5 Ophel — 6 Bezetha —
8. *Church of the Holy Sepulchre* — 9, 10 Upper and Lower Pools of Gihon. — 11.
Bir Eiyub (En Rogel ?) — 12 Pool of Hezekiah — 13 *Fountain of the Virgin*. — 14.
Siloam. — 15. Pool of Bethesda (?) — 16 Mount of Olives — 17 Gethsemane.

N. B.—Modern titles are in *Italics*.

CHAPTER IV.

JERUSALEM ON THE SOUTH.

HAVING thus walked around the northern half of Jerusalem, and back through the street to our camp, we will take our horses for the tour of its southern half. This route has far more ups and downs, and on foot would be more wearying, than that of the morning; hence we ride.

It will be remembered that Jerusalem can be approached on a level only from the north-west and north. On the west, south and east it is guarded by deep and narrow valleys, so that it stands like a great fortress reared aloft, with deep moats on three of its sides. On the north-west and north it connects with the highlands which extend in a series of broad hill-tops through the whole middle line of Judæa.

When you leave the Jaffa Gate and go southward without the walls, you immediately begin to descend from this highland. The constantly-deepening valley is here named Gihon.* As you go farther down it becomes Hinnom, the name which it retains after turning to the east until it meets the Kidron Valley, or Valley of Jehoshaphat. The united ravines then

* It will add to the reader's interest, as well as to his understanding of the topography of Jerusalem, if he will follow the traveler's movements on the maps, and study the Plan of Jerusalem at the time of Christ (page 57), and Topography of Jerusalem (page 69).

descend in one to the deep gorge where sleep the leaden waters of the Dead Sea.

But before leaving the Jaffa Gate let us take a look at the citadel, now called the "Tower of David," which stands beside it, as we may not have occasion to speak of it again. It contains barracks for the Turkish garrison and apartments for the officers, and forms an extended series of fortifications. The lower part of the main tower is built solid of great stones (those on the outer face beveled in the style of Herod the Great), that have stood there since before the time of our Lord. The upper works of the tower and the other parts of the citadel are of less ancient construction. The American consul's *cawass* secured us an entrance to the citadel, with the usual expectation of a liberal *bakshish* on the part of guard and cawass, which, however, is a moderate price to pay for the inspection of a building of such interest. It is pretty well settled that this is the Tower Hippicus described by Josephus in his *History of the Wars of the Jews*.

A motley crowd cluster about the gate as we pass out from it. Here are Jewish pilgrims from many lands, notably Russian and Polish Jews. The long curls or "love-locks" which hang down the cheeks of the men give them an effeminate and affected air, whilst the women conceal their locks under imitation tresses and ornaments. They do not look like the heroes and heroines who dwelt in Zion when her armies repelled the attacks of the mightiest monarchs of the world, or even when, in later days, rushing forth upon the Roman legions of great Titus, they scattered his veterans like summer chaff.

HIPPICUS, NOW CALLED DAVID'S TOWER, THE CITADEL OF JERUSALEM: EXTERIOR VIEW.

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Just over the valley, to the west, are the neat stone houses built for his brethren by the rich Sir Moses Montefiore; but these Jews in Palestine must be less paupers and more like the believing people of God before they will possess the land. At the beginning of this century but three hundred Jews were permitted by the Turkish masters of the land to dwell in Jerusalem. Forty years ago this restriction as to numbers was removed, but they were still kept in one corner of the city. Ten years since this restriction also was abrogated, and now it is estimated that ten thousand—some say thirteen thousand—of the Jerusalemites are Jews. They have bought up old houses and built new ones. A school of agriculture endowed by a Venetian Jew is a hopeful sign. The labor of Christians to lead them to Christ is a more hopeful indication. But it must be said that a walk through the vile streets of the Jewish quarter gives poor promise of good things to come out of this race as seen in the Holy City. Jews come hither to be supported by charity, and to die and be buried in sacred soil, rather than to make their living by tilling the soil and improving the country.*

But not Jews only are met at the Jaffa Gate. Here are the Turks, who despise and rule them, dressed in robes of brilliant hue and with turbaned heads, though the red fez cap is now supplanting the turban. The veiled beauties of Jerusalem meet you with sheet-

* The population of modern Jerusalem is variously estimated at twenty-one thousand, twenty-four thousand, and up to thirty-six thousand. In this last estimate by Dr. Newman, a resident Jewish physician, are included eight thousand Christians, thirteen thousand Jews and fifteen thousand Mohammedans.

like robes, turning them into walking balloons, and veils of white muslin, or more frequently of figured muslin, giving them a hideous appearance. Here too are the tents of the Arabs, poor dwellings in this cold weather, low, dark and dirty—a wretched shelter from driving rain and hail. The camels of these Arabs, now kneeling

beside the tents, have borne from the Jordan plain, or the South Land, fuel and food for the city. Behind them, with loud outcry, cluster the beggars—the blind, the lame, the leper—beseeching alms from the rich howadjis who pass out of the city.

But we must not stop beside the gate. Let us give the rein to our horses and move down to Hinnom. At first the Citadel is on our left. Beyond its

JERUSALEM BEAUTIES.

towers the wall extends, massive and sombre. On our right the valley is a hundred yards in width, with billowy hills rolling westward as far as the eye can reach. Seven hundred yards away is the "Upper Pool," or

Gihon, still well filled with water. As we go down the valley the city-wall surmounting Mount Zion seems to climb higher toward the skies, giving an idea of the strength of David's city when the whole hill was embraced by fortifications. Now a large part of Zion is without the wall, and literally is a ploughed field planted with grain.

That old Zion was not a barbarous capital is shown by the stone-built aqueduct which crosses the valley. Originally, two aqueducts, known as the "High Level" and "Low Level," bore water to the Jewish metropolis, twenty-five hundred feet above the sea, from Solomon's Pools far away to the south of Bethlehem. The High Level aqueduct is in ruins and lost, but the other still carries water into the city. The Lower Pool, the Birket es-Sultân of the Arabs, a noble reservoir which we soon reach, lies below the south-western corner of the city-wall. Once it retained the waters which now run to waste. Everything goes to waste under the Turk. He gathers into his coffers (not to stay there long) all that can be swept from an impoverished land, but gives nothing back. With him, government means the right to tax a people for his own benefit, with no return to people or land. Alas for Zion, ruled for twelve hundred years by Arab and Turk! When shall appear the day of her deliverance and restoration?

But here we are stopping again to moralize, instead of pressing on down the deepening valley of Hinnom. It is hard to dwell in the present amid the memories of such a past as that of Jerusalem.

Our valley grows more precipitous as we turn to the east. On the left the steep slope of Zion over-

hangs us. On the right are the craggy rocks of the Hill of Evil Counsel, pierced with tombs. Farther on we turn our horses up the steep and stony path to the south of the gorge, until we reach an ascent too steep for riding, and dismount. Here, on this crag overlooking the ravine, is Aceldama, the "Field of Blood." Perhaps it once overhung a quarry from which stones were cut for Herod's buildings. Here the traitor Judas, goaded by intolerable remorse, sought to escape from himself by suicide. He hanged himself, but, falling from the summit, died a horrible death, yet did not thus escape from himself. In the world beyond Judas was Judas still. The crimson flowers that dotted the eminence seemed drops of blood, springing to life afresh every paschal season to cry out against the wretch who sold his Lord to murderers.

There is a great vaulted cistern here, or cave, which was long used as a burying-place, but which seems now to be neglected. Why Moslem or Christian or Jew should choose the scene of Judas's treachery for a last resting-place I do not know.

From Aceldama we descend again into Hinnom, and now we are at that Tophet where Solomon suffered an altar to be built to Moloch, god of the Ammonites, to please a heathen wife. In later days the perverse people plunged into deeper and viler idolatry. Not only was Moloch here worshiped, but within his form a fire was kindled, and their own children were laid in his brazen arms to be consumed, their cries being drowned in the wild music of the worshipers. No wonder that the restored Jews, cured of idolatry by a seventy years' Babylonian captivity, abhorred the spot and made

POOL OF SILOAM.

it their Gehenna, where fires burned the offal of the city, that it might be for ever defiled. This is Tophet.

Yet the spot is one of striking and wild beauty. The Hinnom ravine is bordered on one side by Zion, tilled and dotted with trees, on the other by the cliff of Aceldama. The Kidron gorge joins it from the north, here opening out in a little garden-plat watered by the overflow of Siloam. On the east rises the Mount of Offences, a summit of Olivet. Southward, the Kidron Valley winds amid hills toward the Dead Sea, in its centre a brook-way of stones scarce wet after the rains of the week. A little below us is the Bîr Eyub, the "Well of Job," whose title sorely puzzles the learned. There is good reason for holding it to be the well En-Rogel, which marked the line between Judah and Benjamin, and where Adonijah,* son of David, assembled his partisans to crown him in his father's stead. Absalom's rascally plot against his father is also associated with this well, for here it was that Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed, as friends of David, to watch Absalom's movements.† How great is the fall of the ground is shown by the fact that this Bîr Eyub lies five hundred and fifty feet lower than the summit of Zion. As we turn to the left, at the southeastern corner of Zion, going northward, a cleft in it appears. This is the mouth of the Tyropœon Valley, to the north of which rises the hilly promontory of Ophel. Pretty well up this hill lies the Pool of Siloam. It must be conceded that it is a disappointing spot, not fulfilling the promise of our ideal—

"Cool Siloam's shady rill."

* 1 Kings i. 9.

† 2 Sam. xvii. 17.

Yet, in truth, the rill which supplies the pool is shady to a degree, being hidden in a cavernous passage through the solid rock of the hill, which has been traced back to the Fountain of the Virgin, seventeen hundred feet away. The pool is an oblong stone reservoir fifty-three feet long by eighteen feet wide and nineteen feet deep. Its lower wall is out of repair, allowing the water to dribble away to the truck-patches of the valley below.

Yet how can we look upon Siloam, even in its poor estate, without remembering that the Master said to the blind man, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam," and that the blind man here washed his sightless eyes and "came seeing"?*

The village of Silwân, or Siloam, clings to the rocks on the east of the valley. Its mean houses are, some

of them, mere fronts to cave-tombs, in which their owners dwell in company with their goats and donkeys. A miserable cluster of huts is it, with inhabitants to match.

FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN, JERUSALEM

Keeping up the western side of the Kidron, we soon come to the Fountain of the Virgin. A flight of stone

* John ix. 7.

steps leads down to the water, which is out of sight from above, in the cave-reservoir quarried in the rock of Ophel. The girls are bearing from it their jars of water. Poor things! Their jars look heavy as they come up the thirty steps, for some of the bearers are but bits of girls. The big boys who lounge around never think of helping them. Girls are meant for work in this part of the world. From this fountain it is that the underground conduit leads to Siloam. My honored seminary professor, Dr. Edward Robinson, when making his researches, groped his way through the dark passage until he came out at the Pool of Siloam.* For a great part of the distance he could get through on his hands and knees, in darkness and wet, traversing the rock-cut tunnel, but in other places he had to lie in the passage at full length and drag himself on his elbows. Travelers are generally content to take his word for the facts of the passage, rather than to make it for themselves.

Now we descend to the torrent-bed of the Kidron, and our horses pick their way painfully yet carefully amid the stones. This is the highway! We are deep down in the ravine, with Olivet rising on our right and the wall of Jerusalem crowning the height on our left.

Passing the tombs (so called) of Zechariah, of St. James, of Absalom and Jehoshaphat, for the day grows late, and passing Gethsemane too, we turn our horses up the ascent on our left, enter again at the Gate of St.

* Dr. Robinson identified the Fountain of the Virgin with the Pool of Bethesda, basing his argument on the intermitting character of the fountain. But the location of the Fountain of the Virgin does not seem to me to consist with that of Bethesda.

Stephen, tread the stony, muddy, slippery streets, cross the city, go out at the Jaffa Gate, and, gladly entering our tents, cast ourselves on our cots. A day so packed with excitement leaves the traveler weary yet glad. Since morning we had encompassed the entire city.

The circuit of modern Jerusalem is two and a half miles; at the time of its destruction by Titus it was, according to Josephus, four miles.

CHAPTER V.

A TRAMP IN JERUSALEM.

DISMAL is the outlook as the morning breaks upon our camp. The swift west winds come eastward from the Great Sea, and as they strike the ridge on whose summit Jerusalem now stands, at an elevation of twenty-five hundred feet, they pour down their heavy rains on hill and valley. Our canvas houses flap in the blast; they are soaked with the falling drops; streams flood the ground. What is to be done? Shall we venture forth, or shall we take refuge in the city?

But is not Jerusalem before us? Days here are too precious to be lost. So, donning our waterproofs, we start on foot for a tramp. Our city guide is with us. He knows the Judean spring weather too well to lack his rubber suit and heavy boots. He is prepared for storms.

We enter the city and strike straight across it toward Moriah. Men and women in the streets are few. The bare, windowless homes frown with chilly grimness on right and left. The shops, small, closet-like rooms opening on the street, have little that is inviting, yet they are not deserted. The muddy water trickles down the stones and gathers in the middle of the street into a running stream. At times the stream changes to a

pool, around which we pick our way if we may, or through which we wade if we must. Jerusalem in a cold rain is not an enviable place. Donkeys look meek; camels growl disgust; dogs slink out of sight; horses throw back their limp ears with touching resignation. Resignation reigns. Even the pilgrims plod on resignedly. But, happily, the heavens cease to weep and the travelers begin to smile. A ray of sunlight suffices to change resignation into gladness.

Down the descending David street we go until we reach the base of the wall which supports the western face of the old temple-area on the leveled summit of Moriah high above us. Here we are standing in the Tyropœon Valley, having reached a veritable bit of old Jerusalem. It is the well-known "Place of Wailing."

For the most part, the streets and floors of the Jerusalem of apostolic days, and of the older days of Isaiah and Solomon, lie buried thirty or forty feet deep under rubbish. The city has been destroyed and cast down by war, by fire and by earthquake, over and over again. The crumbled ruins have filled its valleys and covered even its hilltops, so that you can scarce find a vestige of the old city above ground. By sinking deep, well-like shafts, Captains Wilson and Warren, followed by later explorers, have proved that the foundation-rock on which the eastern wall of the old temple was laid is now *one hundred feet*, and at its southern end *one hundred and twenty-two feet*, below the present surface of the ground. There still lie in place old stones with the mark of the Phœnician masons upon them, witnesses of the truth of Bible history. Even here on

the west the wall is buried to the depth of seventy feet. We seem to be at the foot of the supporting masonry of Herod's temple, but we are, in fact, far up its perpendicular face. In the flag-paved oblong court in which we stand we look square upon the stones to which the Jews of eighteen hundred years ago looked up from far below. There are five courses of these ancient stones above ground, surmounted by the more modern portion of the wall. They are drafted or beveled (the edges cut away slightly, so as to leave the central part of the stones prominent), as was the custom in the early Jewish masonry, and are in excellent condition. The wall indeed is almost perfect.

To the Jews this is the most sacred spot in all Jerusalem. Here are tangible relics of that temple which was their pride in the days of their glory. In these stones they see mementoes that recall the grandeur of those days of independence to which they look back through ages of oppression and woe. It must be remembered that this wall does not carry back their memories to the days of Herod only, but to the more glorious days of the rebuilding of the temple on its old foundations five hundred years before Herod; yes, and to the very times of the great Solomon himself, whether the courses of stone now visible belong to that period, as they suppose, or have been built upon the true foundations by Herod. Hither they come every Friday to wail out their grief and to cry to the God of their fathers for the restoration of Israel.

Facing the cold stones and covering them with their kisses, they recite the penitential psalms—men and women alike—with groans, sobs and tears:

"O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance;
Thy holy temple have they defiled.
They have laid Jerusalem in heaps;
We are become a reproach to our neighbors,
A scorn and derision to them that are round about us.
How long, Lord?
Wilt thou be angry for ever?" *

They move along the wall as they utter their prayers,
kissing the stones from time to time, some of them

THE WAILING PLACE OF THE JEWS, JERUSALEM.

traversing its whole extent with their kisses, to where
it is terminated by an obstructing angle.

Alas for the poor Jews! they do well to wail. Their
fathers rejected the Christ, and they refuse to own him.
Eighteen centuries ago, looking from Olivet, he uttered

* The seventy-ninth Psalm.

his mournful wail over the wicked city: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!"

How often, how often, as we wandered about the

*"ROBINSON'S ARCH"—REMAINS OF THE ANCIENT BRIDGE WHICH
CROSSED THE TYROPCEON.*

once holy city did the sad plaint, "your house is left unto you desolate," echo from our hearts to our lips!

But a little way from the "Wailing-Place," going southward, lies the famed "Robinson's Arch," so named from its discoverer, Dr. Edward Robinson.

The keen eye of this prince among explorers detected, in the stones projecting from the face of the

supporting wall of the temple-area, the remains of the eastern end of the bridge that once spanned the Tyropœon Valley, connecting Moriah and its temple with Zion and its palace, three hundred and fifty feet away. Three courses of huge stones form a segment of an arch extending fifty feet along the wall. But only the mere beginning of the arch remains, projecting from the venerable wall.

“And do you see any thing of the ‘great stones’ of which the disciples spoke to the Master, and of which the historian Josephus tells his readers?” you ask.

Yes, right here they may be seen and touched and measured—the very stones that stood in the temple-foundations when Jesus trod its courts and uttered his wondrous words to the unbelieving Jews. Here they are in this hoary wall—great hewn stones twenty feet long, twenty-four feet long, thirty-eight feet long! But these stones no longer face the palaces of Zion. A disconsolate field lies in front of them.

Leaving this field, we threaded our way through narrow, noisome streets in the Jewish quarter of the city that exceeded in filth all that we had hitherto seen in ruined, degraded Jerusalem. Oppression has wrought its work upon these poor people, and yields its fruits of degradation. I know not how this district may look in the brightness of a summer sun, but the rain again fell, bearing a stream of filth down the horribly paved street-way that seemed in keeping with the houses into whose open doors we could look. Men, women, houses, streets, were all of a piece.

There are better homes in this Jewish quarter, no doubt, but I give the impression made upon us by the

wretched streets through which we made our way to the Bâb el-Mughârîbeh, "Gate of the Africans," known also as the Dung Gate, standing probably where the "dung gate" spoken of by Nehemiah stood. Here we emerged from the city by a little doorway into the purer air of Zion without the walls. A glance at the map will show the reader that a large part of the hill of Zion is without the present city-walls. The town has so shrunk in population that it cannot fill the space on the hill once packed with the homes and palaces of the fort-city of David. Even the space within the present walls is not occupied, large parts of it lying bare and waste.

But there is a group of buildings without the wall which attract the stranger by their historic interest.

"NEBY DAÛD"—THE TOMB OF DAVID, ON MOUNT ZION.

"Coenaculum" (Supper-room) is the name by which the spot is best known; "Neby Daûd," or Prophet David, is its native title. The first name is taken from the tradition that here is the room in which our Lord

and his disciples celebrated the last Passover supper; the second, from the belief that the tomb of King David is in the rock-vault underneath the same building.

You are admitted to the empty stone upper room, chill in its emptiness, which is about fifty feet long and thirty feet broad, with a ceiling resting upon groined stone arches supported by pillars down the centre. At one end of the room you are shown the staircase descending to the cave where the body of the great king of Israel (David) is believed by Moslems and Jews to rest. Mohammedan fanaticism bars the gate against Christian and Jew, so that you may not enter there.* The tradition which points out this spot as that on which stood the house in which the Last Supper was celebrated is very venerable, going back to the days of Cyril (Kurillos), bishop of Jerusalem, who was born in Jerusalem about A. D. 315. Yet it is not easy to credit it in connection with the Gospel story. If the tomb of David was here, the humble Teacher of Galilee certainly would not have had command of a building almost over it.

However, it is useless to enter upon this and a score of such questions with regard to disputed localities in Jerusalem. The learned write volumes upon them, which too often leave the reader in a profundity of doubt. God seems to have intended that these spots should not become shrines of idolatrous worship, and they have been obliterated. But with ingenious perversity holy places have been invented, and shrines built over them to attract the homage and gifts of the superstitious.

* It was entered by Miss Barclay in disguise some years since.

The chief localities of the city and the natural features of the country around abide, and are unquestioned—Zion, Moriah, Olivet, Hinnom, Kidron—whilst the special sites of the crucifixion, the tomb, the ascension, are left unmarked. Therefore we will not greatly trouble ourselves with the so-called House of Caiaphas and the Armenian Convent, here on Mount Zion, where (if you only have credulity enough) you may see the very spot on which the cock stood which crowed after Peter's denial of his Lord!

Entering the city by the Zion Gate, or Bâb en-Neby Daûd (Gate of the Prophet David), you will visit with interest two synagogues of the Jews, where the modes of worship, as well as the worshipers, are curious to the traveler from the West. The Armenian church of St. James, on Mount Zion, is also a notable building, large and rich in decorations, as also in any number of impossible stories.

But we have seen enough, and wend our way, by the house and church of the good bishop Gobat,* by the American consulate, and out at the Jaffa Gate, to our tents, to enjoy rest and a good dinner enlivened by the sharp wits of our pilgrim band.

* Since deceased.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES AND BETHANY.

MANY are the attractive points about the Holy City, but our hearts call for a visit to the Mount of Olives, enriched with memories of the Master so many and so tender. Shall I say that it is sacred beyond all places on the globe? Bethlehem makes me pause. Was it not there that the Son of God became a babe for us? The Sea of Galilee, too, where Christ wrought his mighty works? But we will postpone comparisons between places, each so redolent with blessed memories. At present it is Olivet that awaits our eager coming. The horses are saddled and impatient to be off. Let us mount and start. But shall we pass through the city or go around it by the north? The longer way is the shorter if time and comfort are considered; so by the north let us go. The road is soon traversed and the north-east angle of the wall turned. Our horses walk down the bridle-path that descends the eastern slope of Moriah, formed of the accumulated rubbish of centuries, and cross the stone bridge spanning the bed of the Kidron. Immediately on our left, after crossing the bridge, is a stone-walled enclosure, in which is the Gothic-arched entrance to the cave where tradition has placed the tomb of the Virgin Mary. The

place is attractive and venerable. Let us go and look. Entering beneath the pointed arch, you find before you a long flight of stone steps leading down to a dark, cavernous chapel and an empty tomb. In this tomb,

VIEW DOWN THE VALLEY OF JEROSHAPHAT IN A RAIN-GUST,
with the south-east angle of the wall of Jerusalem.

it is said, the mother of our Lord was buried. In two side-grottoes are pointed out the graves of Joseph and of the parents of Mary. But it was eight hundred years after these good people were laid to rest that these tales found mention in history. It is as well that we need not believe them. This doleful underground chapel, hung with tawdry drapery and the

scene of childish mummeries, does scant honor to the worthies whose sanctity it would take to itself.

When we visited the tomb-chapel an ignorant priest, standing before a trumpery altar, was performing a service in tones painfully nasal and with a manner most slovenly. The responses came from one small, dark-skinned boy in shabby robes. Neither priest nor boy seemed as much interested in his worship as in us.

Such scenes mar the true memories that cluster about Jerusalem, and tend to strip them of their power over the soul. But we will not yield to them whilst such rich realities surround us. Emerging from the tomb, are not our eyes greeted by Zion? Is not this mount to which we look up, Olivet? Did not David ascend this very mount, barefooted and with covered head, weeping as he went, when driven from his throne by his own ungrateful son? Did not Jesus oftentimes resort hither? Was it not somewhere hereabout that the olive trees grew beneath which the Saviour agonized in prayer? Yes, it is even so. No monkish tales can stretch the mantle of their falsity over these truths.

And now we have just before us the spot which has so long been pointed out as the Garden of Gethsemane. True, it is impossible to identify the locality, yet that need not prevent our entering into the spirit of the sacred scene. It could not have been far from here that the garden lay to which Jesus retired with his disciples after his last Passover in the city. The present Garden of Gethsemane is just at the foot of the mount, on the east side of the Kidron. It is enclosed by a wall, which, though recent, is not an unwelcome enclosure, for it secures the visitor from interruption by

troublesome native gazers, as of old the garden-wall was a protection to the Master's privacy. A gentle monk admitted us, and left it to our choice to enter his little room or to stay without and first look upon the venerable olive trees. In his room are stored the seeds

GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

of flowers grown in the garden, from which the visitor may take what he chooses, making such return as he chooses. The trees are eight in number. Their trunks, thickened and gnarled by the growth of centuries, and in some cases hollow within, are supported by heaps of stones. Flower-beds are about them, and paths divide the garden into four parts. All is neat and quiet. A fence of wooden pickets surrounds the trees, leaving between it and the wall a space for a pathway and for the "stations" in remembrance of the sufferings

of our Lord from his arrest to his burial, at which the devout may stop for prayer. The effect of the whole is tenderly impressive. The walls of Jerusalem, the gate, the descent, the Kidron, reaching Olivet, and these venerable trees, recall the night when Jesus came "unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the dis-

GETHSEMANE BY NIGHT.

ciples, 'Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.'" The silent moon silvered with her beams just such olive trees as these, at the foot of this Mount of Olives, whilst "he fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.'"*

Three paths here part to cross Mount Olivet—one going around by the south, another right up the hill,

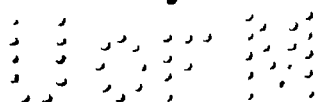
* Matt xxvi. 36-39.

a third diverging to the north. We choose the last of the three, as it is not so steep as the central one. Yet it is steep enough and stony enough to make our horses toil in the ascent. The way is not long, however, and a quarter of an hour finds us at the top on a rounded summit, with a similar summit to the north and another to the south. This central summit stands two thousand six hundred and thirty-nine feet above the sea-level.

The hillside is terraced, with rough stone walls supporting the faces of the terraces, so as to form a series of small level fields, which now were green with young grain. Numerous trees—some almonds, some figs, but mostly olives—dot these fields. The hillside, when viewed from above, wears a quiet, soft and pleasing aspect, in keeping with the sacred associations of this honored mount.

But we cannot say as much for this village on the summit—Kefr et-Tûr—with its dozen or so of stone houses, little cubes whose open doors reveal most uninviting, dark and dingy interiors. The alley-like streets are as filthy as well may be. The *fellâhîn* (peasants) who live here stand at the doors or sit on the sunny side of the walls, while the ready cry of "Bakshîsh! bakshîsh!" comes from the half-naked little ones in the street.

Hard by is the enclosure within which stands a small octagonal chapel over the spot which has long been the reputed scene of our Saviour's ascension. But this tradition is so obviously untrue as to deserve no consideration. The evangelist tells us that Jesus led his disciples out "as far as to Bethany" before he



was parted from them and carried up to heaven.* The ascension could not have been from this summit.

But a dervish from the Moslem monastery is ready to admit us to a minaret which stands here, and from which there is a glorious view. Looking westward, the deep Kidron Valley is at our feet. Beyond it rise the clustered hills of Zion, Moriah, Acra and Bezetha,

JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

with the city seated upon them, its domes and minarets rising clearly above the houses. Turning eastward, our hearts bound as we look across the rolling hills of the Wilderness of Judæa into the depression, twelve hundred feet and more below the sea-level, thirty-nine hundred feet below Olivet, where the valley of the Jordan stretches from north to south, and where

* Luke xxiv 50.



sparkle the blue waters of the Dead Sea. How near it seems! Beyond the Dead Sea the mountains of Moab rise like a wall, hemming in its waves. Nebo is pointed out to us, where Moses was laid to his last rest. Dim in the distance, to the east and north-east, stretch the mountains of Gilead, where the children of Gad pastured their flocks and where David took refuge from Absalom. Now it is given up to the fierce and lawless Bedouin.

But our day's sight-seeing was not yet to close. Bethany was to be visited. So, descending from the minaret, we made a distribution of small coin to the men and boys of the village who had held our horses whilst we had enjoyed this grand panorama, then, mounting, rode eastward over Olivet and down its farther slope.

This is a charming ride. The descent is not sudden, as on the Kidron face of Olivet, but gentle, and the bridle-path leads you through many a pretty spot, with noble vistas opening before you among the rounded hills or down into rocky ravines. The almond trees were now richly clad with their white blossoms, and wild flowers dotted hillside and meadow. Olive trees wore their sober silvery foliage, but the fig trees had not yet put forth their leaves.

It was hereabout that the foul-mouthed Shimei came forth and cursed David as he sadly made his way to the east of Jordan, flying before the revolt of his petted son Absalom, and threw stones and dust at the afflicted monarch who went barefoot and with covered head on his way.*

* 2 Sam. xvi. 5-9.

A little farther, and Bethany is before us. It was by this path, beyond question, that our Master often went after his weary days in Jerusalem to find rest, shelter and sympathy with his loved friends, Lazarus,

Martha and Mary.

Bethany never was aught but a village in a vale on the eastern slope of Olivet, looking out on the dreary gorge leading down through a wilderness of barren hills to Jericho and the Jordan. No palaces ever rose here;

DISTANT VIEW OF BETHANY

no deeds chronicled by this world's history were enacted here. Were it not for *one* association, Bethany would be a name unknown, lost long ago in human forgetfulness of spots not worthy of remembrance. But *with* that one association it lives, and will live after names great in history shall have passed into the oblivion of contempt.

In a poor hamlet far up the Nile the traveler hears the same Arabic tongue that is spoken in the Bethany of to-day. The villagers of El-Uxor and the villagers of El-Aziriyeh* do not greatly differ in estate, but widely different are the causes that draw pilgrims to

* Bethany is now named El-Aziriyeh, from the Arabic form of Lazarus, whose memory still dwells in the place



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the two. The traveler journeys far to look upon the pylons and propylons of the Egyptian temples about which the poor Luxor clusters. He muses with awe as he gazes upon the stupendous but now ruined porches, gates and columned halls of "hundred-gated Thebes." Walking amid its obelisks, its colossal statues, its avenues of sphinxes, its wonders of human labor, shattered and spread for miles on both sides of the Nile, he recalls the power of those Pharaohs at whose nod masses of men carved and moved and built those obelisks, statues, temples and palaces; he sees the kingly retinues of Thotmes, Seti, Rameses, with priestly processions and marching armies. Thebes has its memories—memories of irresponsible tyrants, of cruel wars, of plundered kingdoms, of crushed peoples. Far other are the memories that draw pilgrims to Bethany. Lifting their thoughts above the meanness of the present, they remember that Bethany sheltered the divine Saviour when weary with travel, worn by contact with sin and with the wiles of crafty enemies; they remember that he whom Jesus loved dwelt here; that here was the perfumed ointment poured from the alabaster box upon his head by the hand of affection; that here his voice called the dead Lazarus to life; that here it was that "Jesus wept." All of Bethany's memories gather about the home in which Jesus, the Christ, found a refuge—where the perfumed ointment was but a symbol of a loving sympathy more fragrant than costliest nard. To the child of God, the follower of Christ, few spots can be so full of tenderest interest.

The village, El-Aziriyeh, is a collection of mean and

ruinous stone houses, yet it nestles prettily in a nook in the mountain-slope. Just above the inhabited houses stand the ruins of a more ambitious dwelling; this is pointed out—most absurdly—as the house of Simon where Mary poured the ointment on the Saviour's head. We were also led to the traditional Tomb of Lazarus, a deep vault reached by a flight of twenty-six steep stone steps down into the underlying rock. This vault does not at all correspond with the story* of the raising of Lazarus *without* the town, nor is it in the form of the early sepulchres; yet the very suggestion makes more real the fact that, standing before some rock-tomb not far from here, the Son of God said, "Lazarus, come forth;" and the dead arose from his grave. A "House of Mary and Martha" is also shown to travelers. It is in an enclosure surrounded by a wall, and is inhabited; but the tradition is worthy of no attention. Doubtless, fragments of an older Bethany are built into these houses, but the houses of the days of Christ have long since been cast to the ground.

And shall we here expose the infirmity of the author's steed—Abdallah? Abdallah had many excellent qualities, but good temper was not in the list of his virtues. In fact, it cannot be denied that he was a desperate hater and fighter—a backbiter of pronounced malignity. On reaching Jerusalem my friend Dickey's Jaffa horse was exchanged for a mettlesome and showy gray with sweeping mane and tail, who excited the admiration of all beholders. Abdallah instantly perceived in him a rival for the equine championship of

* Given in John xi.

the party, and a rival he could not brook. The moment that Selim was within reach Abdallah's teeth were ready for an attack. Here, in the street of Bethany, as we turned to move away from the Tomb of Lazarus, Abdallah sprang with ears thrown back and open mouth at Selim. Selim reared and struck at Abdallah with his fore feet, then wheeled to kick. The conflict in the narrow way, crowded with horses, men and boys, quickly scattered the sons of Bethany, eager to save their limbs. The riders of the contending steeds were happy to have the battle end without broken limbs or serious damage to any of the parties. It was the first, but by no means the last, of these outbreaks.

We had reached Bethany from Jerusalem by the path which crosses Olivet near its summit, a distance of rather less than two miles; we returned by a route which bends to the south, avoiding the summit of the mountain. It is a pleasant ride, beside and over the ridges, but it has a glory before which all earthly beauties fade. This is the way over which our blessed Master made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem six days before his crucifixion. He had come up from Jericho two days before, and the next morning set out for the Holy City. An admiring multitude surrounded him, delighted to do him honor. The young ass was brought for him to sit upon. As he drew near the descent of Olivet branches were cut from the trees and strewn in his way by the exultant people. Robes were taken by their wearers from their shoulders and laid on the ground over which the ass on which the Great Teacher rode

should tread, while the air was rent with cries of "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" *

Nor could we doubt, as we turned the southern

ANCIENT JERUSALEM FROM THE SOUTH-EAST, WITH THE ROMAN CAMPS.

shoulder of Olivet and Jerusalem burst upon our view—beautiful even now in its fallen estate, how magnificent then in its highest glory!—that just at this spot our Lord stopped to gaze with infinite com-

* Mark xi. 8-10.

passion and grief on the city that would so soon reject and crucify him.

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, ‘If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee around and keep thee in on every side; and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.’” *

Some in that multitude lived to see the bitter day when the guilty daughter of Zion lay crushed, bleeding and trampled under the feet of the Roman conqueror, Titus. Her people rejected their Messiah, and nailed him, by Roman hands, to the cross. Thus was the cup of her iniquities filled, and Jerusalem was given over of God to destruction by those Romans at whose hands they had demanded the execution of Him who came to be their Saviour. Thirty-three years of riot, outbreak and revolt followed that guilty day, and the city was destroyed with a destruction at whose horrors the blood of the reader of its details is chilled.

Silently we rode down the declivity of Olivet, crossed the Kidron, and then up the opposite ascent.

We did not take the route by the north of the city, nor did we pass through it, preferring to return to our camp by the south. So, giving our horses the rein,

* Luke xix. 41-44.

we suffered them to walk slowly up the slope of Zion, passing Siloam and following the path lying immediately under the wall.

As the way is narrow, we marched in single file. Suddenly the foremost horse halted and backed in terror upon his next follower, and he upon the next. A dead horse, skinned and ghastly, at which a wolfish dog was tearing, lay right in the way, completely filling it. Our terrified beasts would not pass over it. A couple of peasants, man and wife, who were cultivating the field on our left, helped us out of our difficulty by tearing down a place in the loose stone wall, up which our horses could scramble and make a *détour*, through the young grain growing on Zion's summit, around the terrifying carcass.

It may seem surprising that such an object should be met in such a ride, but it is not out of keeping with Syrian police arrangements. We passed the same way a few days later, and only a well-picked bone here and there was to be seen. The dogs had cleared the obstruction away. Why pay scavengers to remove carrion when the work will be done by the dogs for nothing? Long live the dogs of Jerusalem!

And now on for home! The clouds are rolling up from the Mediterranean on the wings of the west wind. They sweep over Sharon and darken the mountains of Judah. Our tents are welcome. But they are frail houses in the storm that rages through the night. The thunder mutters, then roars; the blasts of wind make our canvas walls to quiver, flap and bulge. Down pours the rain, yet rather does it dash than fall. The earth is soaked, but little trenches divert

the streams from entering our tents. We get through the night with no harm, but our dragoman decides that it will not do to stay longer under canvas in such weather when there are walled houses so near, and tells us that he has made arrangements for our accommodation at the Casa Nova of the Latin convent of the Franciscans.

The next day was the Sabbath. In the morning we called, by appointment, upon our courteous American consul, Willson, to accompany him to the English Church, which stands on Mount Zion, near the Tower of Hippicus and hard by the American consulate. This church is connected with the mission of the English Church Missionary Society, at the head of which was then the venerable and excellent Anglo-Prussian bishop, Gobat.

It was a favor, in this land of strange tongues, to join in a service in our "kindly English speech" with a company of English and American residents and travelers and of Jews converted to Christianity or in the mission-schools. The communion of saints was a blessed reality. The sermon, by one of the English Church missionaries, a son-in-law of Bishop Gobat, was modest and evangelical. In the communion of the Lord's Supper, which followed the service, Christ, as the Saviour who died for sinners without the wall of this Jerusalem, was more real to me than in any of the many sacred spots which we have visited. This was a true "Holy Place."

This mission is doing a good work for Jew and Gentile. May it be abundantly blessed in leading men to Jesus as the true and only Redeemer of Israel! Jews

are flocking into Jerusalem. If they seek here for the restoration of Israel to national sovereignty without Jesus the Christ, they will be disappointed. If they find him, and in him their Messiah, it will be well.

BETHANY.

CHAPTER VII.

TEMPLE-AREA AND MOSQUE OF OMAR.

WE have said little of one of the most noteworthy spots in all Jerusalem—that on which stood the temple of the Lord, where, in the Holy of Holies, rested the ark of the covenant, where Solomon sacrificed,

THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, JERUSALEM.

and where also stood that later temple in which our Lord so often taught the people. It is not a place

that you may visit when you will. Indeed, until recently it could not be visited by the Christian at all; had the traveler presumed to enter this thrice-holy place, the savage fanaticism of its African Moslem guardians would have forbidden his leaving it alive. In fact, the guards were authorized to kill any Christian intruder. Now, however, it can be entered with suitable permits. An order must be had, through your consul, from the governor of the city. A cawass (an officer of the consul) accompanies the party and presents the order at the gate of the area, and then you are handed over to the guardians of the holy place, to whom a fee is to be paid.

That the Harâm esh-Sherîf ("The Noble Sanctuary") occupies the ground on which rose Solomon's temple is beyond dispute. The mountain-top was leveled and the platform extended, so as to give a surface of sixteen hundred by a thousand feet. Massive walls were built up on the east, south and west to sustain the broadened space on which stood the temple with its courts and colonnades. The first temple having been destroyed, the second was built by the Jews upon their return from the Babylonian captivity. This temple was rebuilt and magnificently adorned by the vile and bloody yet mighty Herod the Great shortly before the birth of our Lord.

This glorious building, which in the morning sunlight blazed like a heavenly vision upon its lofty hill, was cast to the ground by the Romans under Titus. In its place stands the beautiful Kubbet es-Sakhrah ("The Dome of the Rock"), now known all the world over as the "Mosque of Omar."

ONE OF THE EIGHT SIDES OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR

Led by our guide, and ushered by our cawass, impressively girt with belt and sword, we reached the gate of the Harâm, and there dismounted from our horses. Crossing the open space within the walls, we ascended by a few broad steps to the upper platform on which stands the "Dome of the Rock," an octagonal building surmounted by a graceful dome. But now we are reaching holy ground, and must put off our shoes (as Moses did in the presence of God on Horeb) before we enter the mosque. Some of us walked through the building in our stocking feet or in slippers provided for us by the black servitors of the mosque; others, who had worn India-rubber overshoes, were treated more leniently, since the putting off of the outer shoes was accepted as meeting the requirements of the law.

On entering this unique building we were instantly awed by its dim and solemn light, yet gazed about us with profound interest. The dome above us, covered with gold and arabesque tracery, the mosaics of the walls, the marble pillars, the subdued purple light from the sixteen windows high up beneath the dome, the stillness, with the sacred associations of the place and the mystery which for centuries has enveloped it, combined to touch the imagination and to move the feelings of the visitor.

But this strangely impressive building is only the covering of the true centre of attraction; it is the dome of "THE ROCK." Between the Corinthian pillars that support the dome is an iron railing, and within this a lattice-work enclosing a space of sixty feet in diameter. Within this lattice-work, and overhung by

a crimson silk canopy, rests in solemn silence the bare rock of the summit of Moriah. This is THE ROCK, to

INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR.

which the glorious dome is but a covering. You may not go within the lattice, but you may thrust your hand through and be thrilled by the touch of the si-

lent, august rock, which rises five feet above the floor of the mosque.

And is this rocky eminence the very Moriah where Abraham laid Isaac on the altar? And in later days did David here sacrifice on the threshing-floor of Araunah? And in days still later—yet how long ago!—did the altar of burnt-offering stand here?

Ah, what tales could that rock tell had it the power of speech! But its stony stillness, its tongueless silence, thrill you as your hand rests upon it. To Christian, to Jew and to Moslem it is a hallowed spot.

To the Mohammedan this is a place of marvelous sanctity, since here you are shown the footprint in the stone left by Mohammed when he sprang from earth to heaven. Here too is the print of the hand of the archangel Gabriel when he held down the rock as it endeavored to follow the prophet in his upward flight! We were permitted to explore all parts of the building, and even to go down (by eleven steps) into the little cave beneath and within "The Rock," where it is said that Mohammed prayed, and beneath which, some say, are the gates of hell. It is probable that if exploration were permitted a cistern would be found beneath its floor.

Our tall, gaunt Moslem guide showed us in another part of the mosque a green marble slab of wondrous properties and prophetic power, upon which he requested us to lay a piece of money, assuring us that if we did so we should reach heaven. Unhappily for the worthy gentleman's purse, our faith again was not equal to his assertion. It is alleged that the scales in which the souls of men are weighed are here. We

will not dispute the fact, but we did not see this spiritual balance.

Leaving the Mosque of Omar, we put on our shoes and crossed the area to the Mosque el-Aksa at its southern limit. This was originally a Christian church, built by the emperor Justinian in the sixth century. Now it is a Mohammedan mosque, so off must come our shoes whilst we walk over its fifty thousand square

MOSQUE EL-AKSA, JERUSALEM.

feet of surface and amid its multitudinous pillars. Of these pillars, two stand close together, and he who can pass between them, we are told, will be able to enter the gates of heaven. To the writer the ordeal was not severe. But to some of our party, afflicted with greater breadth of beam, it was a pinching test, while one unfortunate, after painful writhings and con-

tortions, failed to effect the passage. We did not observe, however, that this failure affected his appetite or slumbers.

Many of the wonders of Jerusalem are to be sought below its surface, so we descended by a stairway to the vault beneath El-Aksa, and again by another stone stairway to a yet lower vault. This vault is believed to have been a vestibule belonging to the double gateway by which entrance was had in the days of our Lord to the temple-court above. The lintels and finely-hewn columns of this double gateway stand here as they stood, perchance, in the days when our Lord came to the temple to teach the people in the magnificent colonnades built by Herod. The silent chamber beneath El-Aksa is now used by the Moslems as a place of worship. Here, kneeling on the mats with which the stone floor is carpeted, they turn toward Mecca and offer their prayers. It is a thought-quickenning spot to Christian and Jew, as well as to Mohammedan.

Coming again to the surface after your visit to the vaults beneath El-Aksa, you pass to the little Mosque of Isa (or Jesus) at the south-east corner of the Harâm. Entering a little dome, you descend to an underground room where is shown a stone "Cradle of Jesus." At this you do not tarry long. Again descending by a second flight of steep stone steps, you find yourself within the remarkable "Substructions of the Temple," called by the Arabs "Solomon's Stables," and believed by them to be the handiwork of the demons.

It will be recalled that this southern portion of the

temple-area is an extension of the surface of the summit of the mountain. This extension is here supported by arched vaults, resting upon a series of pillars formed of great oblong blocks of stone, and

SUBSTRUCTURE OF THE TEMPLE-AREA, KNOWN AS "SOLOMON'S
STABLES," JERUSALEM.

extending, row after row, to the west and north. It is through a breach in the vaulted roof of this arcade that you descend. The roots of trees growing in the area above penetrate the crevices in this roofing and dangle above you as you walk through these strange old aisles. Who built these piers? Did the Arabs? Did Herod? Did Solomon? Who can tell? We look and wonder, but the answer is not yet.

Again we ascend to the area above and traverse its

surface, following the eastern wall of the old temple-enclosure. Pretty flowers, wild flowers, smile on us from the soil, whilst glorious views of the Kidron gorge, with Olivet beyond, allure our eyes to the farther prospect. Again we descend below the level of the Harâm-area, and stand within the Golden Gate, which is now solidly built up; then emerging, sated with the much that we have seen, we reach the gate by which we entered the Harâm es-Sherîf, bestow our fees, make our salaams to our Moslem guide, mount our horses and take our clattering way out through the city streets to our camp.

CHAPTER VIII.

TO BEIT NETTÎF AND HEBRON.

THE morning was wet and cold as we sallied forth from the Jaffa Gate of Jerusalem for a tour in Southern Judæa. The rain dripped on man and horse, but we had waited two days for fair weather, and would not wait longer. So, clad in rubber suits, we bade farewell for a while to the Holy City and turned our faces southward.

Our way led us past the new houses for Jews built by Sir Simon Montefiore, across the valley of Hinnom and up the ascent beyond. Here we entered on an oval upland plain skirted by a hilly rim. This undulating plain of tillable land is that "Valley of the Rephaim" where the Philistines were defeated by David soon after he had stormed and taken Zion from the Jebusites. The Philistines had penetrated the hills almost to David's doors, but this able warrior brought his troops into their rear, and, acting by divine direction, when he heard "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees," attacked them with sudden fury and put them to flight.*

For an hour we passed through these upland plains and hills, whose tillage was pleasant to look upon,

* 2 Sam. v. 22-25.

even though no houses are there to give life to the scene; then, crossing a ridge where stands the monastery of Mar Elias, or St. Elijah, we looked back upon Jerusalem and forward to Bethlehem. Our hearts beat quicker at the sight—the first sight—of Bethlehem. There, on the brow of the hill, stretched the stone-built village of David and of David's son and

THE TOMB OF RACHEL, DISTANT VIEW.

Lord. On the slope to the east were shepherds with their flocks of sheep and goats, just where David in his youth fed his father's flocks, and where, a thousand years after David went to his rest, the angel of the Lord appeared to other shepherds, saying, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." But we did not now

tarry to study the place where the wonder of wonders was revealed to men. Looking with eager eyes on the hill and valley and the high-perched town, we turned south-westward toward the Land of Philistia.

But did not Rachel, the beloved of Jacob, die somewhere hereabout? And is not Rachel's Tomb still to be seen?

Yes, there it is just before us, scarce a mile this side of Bethlehem. Let us approach the spot tenderly, for here were sad hearts when the dear mother of Joseph and of the new-born Benjamin was snatched by death from loving arms and laid in the silent grave. It was three thousand years ago, but the tale of love and

sorrow is ever real to the responsive soul. This whitened dome is not the tomb, but a modern building. The tomb of Rachel is beneath it.

With what poetic beauty does Matthew picture Rachel as rising from this, her long resting-place, in full sight of Bethlehem, to bewail the infants there slain by Herod

RACHEL'S TOMB.

in his vain effort to destroy the hope of Israel!—"Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they were not."*

* Matt. ii. 18, quoting freely Jer. xxxi. 15.

Leaving the tomb of Rachel, we journeyed southward, and stopped to lunch at Solomon's Pools—El-Burâk. The rain pattered down on us and our tin plates whilst we reflected upon the value of the rain

EL-BURÂK—THE POOLS OF SOLOMON, WITH SARACENIC CASTLE.

to the people of the land, and tried to rejoice in their joy at the coming of the precious drops from the "river of God, which is full of water." We were learning to appreciate the worth of the rainfall and to understand the psalmist's joy in it:

"Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it;
Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of
water;
Thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.
Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly;
Thou settlest the furrows thereof;

Thou makest it soft with showers ;
Thou blessest the springing thereof.
Thou crownest the year with thy goodness ;
And thy paths drop fatness.
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness ;
And the little hills rejoice on every side.
The pastures are clothed with flocks ;
The valleys also are covered over with corn ;
They shout for joy, they also sing." *

After inspecting the pools, to which we were to return, we went on our way, rejoicing that the rain, however welcome to the people, held up for a while for our benefit. *Road* we cannot call the way, for there is but one bit of road in all Palestine ; and this "cross-lots" track westward over the mountains certainly could not aspire to that title. Such a track for travel it is hard for any one to imagine who has not passed over it. Up and down and around and across rocks and stones and mud we went. Our poor horses meditated each step, dropping their fore feet down from rock to rock or climbing laboriously up the stony ascents. If you will imagine the Capitol at Washington toppled down on its flights of steps, and a few hours spent in riding over the mass, you will get some idea of a Palestine cross-road. Yet wherever there is any soil you have most charming flowers smiling lovingly up to you. Our Father's tokens of love spring up amid the harshest rocks in nature as in providence. Every bit of green sward is (in this rainy season) dotted all over with flowers—white, blue, crimson, pink and golden yellow.

At dusk we overtook our camp-mules, with our

* Ps. lxxv. 9-13.

faithful Chaya in charge. The bells tinkled cheerily, the muleteers stepped on bravely, and all rejoiced as we passed through the village of Beit-Nettif to our camp-ground, on a rocky promontory facing westward and overlooking the Philistine country, with the mountain-passes so hotly contested by Israel and their troublesome neighbors of the plains. Before the tent-equipage could be unfastened Yakoob had his charcoal fire kindled, ready to achieve marvels of skill with slender means. The tents were swiftly raised under Abdou's orders, the iron cots unfolded, the beds made, and the American flag was flying over our dining-tent in a wonderfully short time, to the intense delight of all Beit-Nettif, to whom an encampment of howadjis is a rare sight. Weary with hard travel, we threw ourselves down until called to dinner, when hot soup and a well-cooked "man-turkey" made us all right again.

But it is high time that a yet unnamed member of the party, the representative of a large population in Syria, should be introduced to the reader—to wit, "Dog Jack." Before we reached Jerusalem we found that our train had an attaché on whom we had not counted—a Syrian dog that joined our company at Joppa and traveled with us all the way to Lebanon in the far north

SYRIAN DOG,

The dogs of the East are not the petted favorites of our Western homes. They are a masterless, ownerless race, living in packs, and foraging for their living within a certain range, and more like jackals or wolves than dogs as known to us. Their mode of life makes them surly, snarling, savage and filthy beasts. By the Mohammedans they are treated with cruelty and looked upon with disdain. Moslem contempt and disgust for Christians finds fit expression in the epithet "Christian dogs." Nor could the dog have been a much-respected member of society in Bible times. The phrases "Am I a dog that I should do this thing?"—"Am I a dog's head?"—and the like, express the feeling that exists in Syria to-day.

It is a fashion for one of these homeless dogs to attach himself to a party of travelers, and to cleave to it in all its wanderings, living on the crumbs that fall from its table. At Joppa a strong, yellow-haired, wolfish fellow became our camp-follower, to whom we gave the name of Jack. So utterly unused was he to kindness or notice that it was some time before we could have any personal relations with him. The meaning of fondling or petting had never entered his head. He could not at first understand that our actions meant kindness. It was only after many days of feeding and coaxing that we were able to get from Jack a wag of the tail in response to our offers of food and friendship. But at length we *did* succeed thus far, though he never became fully possessed of the meaning of our efforts to have friendly relations with him. Yet as a watchman he was most faithful—too faithful, indeed, at times, for our sleep was often

interrupted by his furious barking at the village dogs that came by night to forage on the camp-ground claimed by him. Jack was faithful to the forage at least.. No Beit-Nettîf dog was allowed to share with him what fell from the table of his howadjis.

After our family worship we were glad to turn into bed. Though our tents flapped in the west wind and the rain pattered heavily, adding to the wetness of creation in general, our sleep was sweet.

It may as well be understood by the would-be pilgrim that travel in Palestine during the rains has its prose as well as its poetry. It was our lot to fall upon a ten-days' rain-spell, and to learn this fact thoroughly.

There was something startling in finding in this rude spot, with its semi-savage inhabitants, fragments of mosaic pavements laid in the rocky ground. But this is only one of many evidences of former wealth and culture in this now abused, oppressed and ruined land. Palestine was not always what it now is.

In the morning, after breakfast and prayers, we mounted and rode to a hilltop, from which we saw Beth-Shemesh to the north-west, with the valley up which the lowing kine bare the ark of the covenant from Ekron.* The place is now called Ain-Shems. Farther to the north lay Samson's home, Zorah. In the west and south-west spread the plain land of Philistia, while the Mediterranean Sea beyond reflected a fitful gleam of silvery sunlight. But our route lay to the south-west, to visit that valley of Elah where occurred the fight between young David, the shepherd of Bethlehem, and the giant of Gath.† A fifteen min-

* 1 Sam. vi.

† 1 Sam. xvii

utes' ride brought us to a ridge-top from which we looked down upon the oval, hill-girt plain identified as the scene of this eventful conflict. On the opposite ridge stands Shuweikeh, the old Shochoh. Between the two lies a beautiful amphitheatre, with a steep hill sloping down to a green meadow on each side, and the torrent-bed (now known as Wâdy es-Sunt) winding between—a river of white pebbles and stones. This amphitheatre I judge to be here nearly a mile in width and three miles in length, running nearly east and west. It presents more than I looked for in its entire adaptation to the dear old Bible story. The army of Saul would find admirably secure camping-ground on the northern hillside, in communication with the hill-country at their back and a fine plain in front for military movements. On the other side of the wâdy (or torrent-bed) the Philistines had a position equally good, with their own land behind them. The plain between at the time of our visit was clothed with young wheat. The "brook" was nearly dry, even after a week of rain—a bed of stones.

It was over our route of yesterday, mayhap, that the agile young shepherd came down to visit his brothers in the army. His patriotic ardor rose as he saw Saul's battalions advancing on the plain. His face flushed with shame when they, the army of the living God, fled from the face of the heathen giant. In this brook-bed he gathered his five smooth stones from the many, selecting with prudent care those fitted for his sling. Over it he stepped, and just beyond, where now the young wheat is green, he met Goliath. "In the name of the Lord of hosts" he went, with a

faith that made his eye true, his hand steady, his arm strong. It was one stone, well aimed and unflinchingly hurled, and the champion of Philistia fell to the earth. Panic-stricken, the Philistines fled over the

JEWISH SLINGER.

saddle of the ridge in the rear of their camp, perhaps also westward down the valley, pursued by the exultant men of Israel.

We bore away with us "smooth stones" from the

brook as mementos of the spot. May we have also David's faith in God!

Our way now led us south-eastward up the Wâdy es-Sunt (Vale of Acacias), and then by the constantly-narrowing Wâdy es-Sûr, which at length became a gorge hemmed in by precipitous rocks. Here and there the mouths of caves open on the valley. As in the days of David, so now, these caves afford dwelling-places to the mountaineers. As we rode toward one of them to inspect it, an Arab rushed at us in intense excitement, waving us away and giving us to understand that his family were living in this cave. Of course we respected the scruples of this hot-headed householder, though sorry not to examine the cavern, which promised to be one of size and interest.

The road in the upper part of this wâdy is strikingly wild and thick-set with stone and rock. Yet it is one of the highways to the city of Hebron. The spot at which we stopped for our noonday rest and lunch would charm by its romance a company out for a picnic in America. On one side of the narrow gorge was the cave-tomb of some worthy to us unknown, whilst over against it a little space of level ground beneath the cliff gave standing-room to a group of low-branching trees. Our horses were tied to the trees while we took our refreshment, and our long train of mules and donkeys, with camp-equipage and muleteers, passed on to reach Hebron before us.

We soon followed them, slowly picking our way up the constantly ascending ravine. Attaining a height of twenty-five hundred feet above the sea-level, we found ourselves on the great central ridge of Judæa.

the backbone of the land, running north and south throughout its length. Here we came again on upland tillage, and wound in and out among the terraced hills until Hebron was in sight.

The country around Hebron gives one an idea of what Palestine once was in agricultural wealth, and of what it again might be with a thrifty people and an

DISTANT VIEW OF HEBRON.

honest government. The hills are terraced, step above step, and planted with the grapevine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, the apricot and the olive, or are sown in grain. In contrast with much of Judæa, the aspect of this district, the old Vale of Eshcol, is most pleasing; the terrace-walls give evidence of *recent* labor; and in this is the secret of its better condition.

So little encouragement is given to enterprise or industry that in a large part of the land everything is permitted to go to ruin. Government seeming to exist only to plunder the villages under the cover of taxation, all heart is lost by the peasantry. Trees are cut down; the soil, unprotected by their roots, is washed away; the terrace-walls fall stone by stone; the earth is carried down the hillsides to be borne away by winter torrents, until at last these mountain-ridges and hills become masses of barren rock. It is pitiful to look upon a land thus abused. It awakens indignation. You long to see some strong-handed Christian power hurl the Turk from his tyrannous throne and establish a government whose end shall be the protection of industry, the encouragement of right-doing and the promotion of the well-being of those who draw their living from an unpropitious soil. For the emancipation of this land we must await God's providence.

For the present we jog on, yet with quickening interest as we draw near that ancient city, Hebron. We pass through walled lanes and by fountains from which the patriarchs slaked their thirst, and find our tents pitched on a gentle slope on the west of the town and facing it. The rabble crowd around us, but are driven off by our sturdy muleteers with a hearty zeal quite refreshing, whilst we dismount and prepare for a walk through the venerable place which occupies the hillside just before us.

Hebron has two elements of interest to all travelers: the first is its almost unrivaled age, its history stretching back as far as any still-existing cities can be traced

with certainty—Damascus being its one rival, Sidon, perhaps, another; the second, its close association with the life of that grand figure of antiquity, Abraham, and his immediate descendants, the patriarchs of the Hebrews.

It first appears in the record of three thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven years ago (B. C. 1917), when Abraham came hither to dwell, pitching his tent here and building an altar.* It was from Hebron that he started northward in pursuit of the confederate chieftains from Mesopotamia who had harried the cities of the plain, taking captive his nephew Lot. It was at Hebron that the word of the Lord came to him, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and thine exceeding great reward," and where the promise was given to the childless patriarch that his seed should be as the stars of heaven. It was at Hebron that Sarah died, and that Abraham acquired by purchase a burial-place—the only ground he ever owned in the land promised to his children—the cave of Machpelah.† Here he buried Sarah, and here he too was laid to rest. Here Isaac was buried, and Rebekah. Hither the embalmed body of Jacob was brought from Egypt and laid beside the tomb of Leah.

Hebron appears again four centuries after the days of Abraham, for hither came the men sent by Moses from the wilderness "to spy out the land of Canaan," and here they found those sons of Anak before whom "they were in their own sight as grasshoppers." In front of Hebron is that vale called Eshcol (a cluster of grapes) "because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence."‡

* Gen. xiii. 18.

† Gen. xxiii.

‡ Num. xiii. 17–25.

Fifty years later it was given to the Levites and made a city of refuge; and here, four centuries afterward, David reigned for seven years and a half over the tribe of Judah.

The "valley" is not far from twenty-eight hundred feet above sea-level, and is still famous for its vineyards and grapes. It runs from north to south, the city lying upon the slope of the hill and looking westward. Hebron is still a place of note, with eight or ten thousand inhabitants and some industries, particularly manufactures of glass bangles, rings and lamps, and of skin bottles. It is not ill built, its houses being of stone two stories in height, with domed roofs. Two cut-stone reservoirs at the two ends of the place claim high antiquity; the southern one is probably that beside which the murderers of Ish-bosheth, son of Saul, were hanged by David's orders.*

But the one spot which claims the traveler's interest is the sepulchral cave in which were buried Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Unhappily, Moslem bigotry forbids to all Christians a sight of this honored cave. Even the building erected over Machpelah is guarded with so jealous a fanaticism that entrance within its walls has been accorded to Christians but twice or thrice in recent times. The gates of the Cave of Machpelah itself, the attraction of the spot, are barred against all "Christian dogs." It is not known that even the "true believers" are permitted to pass its portals. Moslem fanaticism makes it needful for Christians to use caution even in approaching the Harâm, whose walls overtop all Hebron.

Four or five hundred Jews live in Hebron. One of

* 2 Sam. iv.

these, a youth with a sickly complexion, not improved by the effeminate love-locks which hung down his cheeks, was engaged by our dragoman to be our guide through the city. But scarce had we left our tents when a venerable Bedouin Arab, tall, slender, wrinkled and gray-bearded, strided up to us and eagerly took us by the hand, motioning our Jew aside with the imperiousness of a king. From his lordly air and venerable mien we might have supposed him the great Sheikh Abraham risen from his grave—somewhat threadbare in apparel, to be sure, and dilapidated in general appearance. He was saluted by the crowd of vivacious Moslem boys who dogged our steps with loud cries of "Sheikh Hamzi! Sheikh Hamzi! Sheikh Hamzi!"

This was indeed none other than the notable Sheikh Hamzi of the Jehalin tribe, who accompanied Canon Tristram in his journeyings. He immediately con-

SHEIKH HAMZI.

stituted himself our guide, nor did we regret it, as a gray-bearded Moslem is a better protector in Hebron than a young Jew.

The ancient pool looked uninviting indeed, with a thick green scum on its surface, and the way was vile; nor did this vileness cease when we entered the city. Nastier streets than those of Hebron at that wet season I would not care to tread. Yet one beautiful object we did see—a noble camel kneeling in the street, almost blocking the narrow way, whose coat of curling hair was perfectly white. It was a beauty indeed. Passing a bottle-making establishment, we were entertained by the sight of a lot of goat-skins in process of curing. All the apertures of the skins, neck

and legs, having been closed, and the bodies filled with water, they stood in rows upon a platform—a headless, legless, swollen army of hairy goats. When thoroughly cured these

SKIN BOTTLES.

skins become the leather bottles of Bible days and of the present day alike. They are in universal use, varying in size from the skin of the kid to that of the ox.*

* The reader will recall the Psalmist's expression: "I am become like a bottle in the smoke." Of course it is to the leather bottle that he likens himself—dry, shriveled and useless. So also the "wine-bottles, old and rent," of the Gibeonites, were not made of glass.

Our course through the streets was an ascent to the Harâm, the holy place of the Hebron mosque. Its enclosing wall is two hundred feet in length, one hundred and fifteen feet in width and more than fifty feet in height. The wall is massive, and unbroken by a single window, standing in a solemn simplicity which well becomes the venerable site which it guards. At

HEBRON.

its south-east corner a stone stairway leads up to an entrance above. We were permitted to ascend this stairway a short distance, and to look through a hole in the wall on our left, and to see—darkness! But as the bystanders began to scowl and growl, our Sheikh Hamzi led us to another side of the Harâm, and up the slope to a roof on a level with the top of the wall. It must be confessed that we saw nothing satisfactory; only enough to make us wish to see more. It was

not our fortune to have with us the future king of England, so that we were not suffered to see what the Pasha of Jerusalem feared to refuse to the Prince of Wales and Dean Stanley.* Yet even the heir of the English throne and the dean were not permitted to pass the gate that guards the Cave of Machpelah. They only entered the mosque which stands over it. The day may come when the barriers will be removed and the graves of the patriarchs be opened to the traveler's gaze.

Sheikh Hamzi, having shown us all that infidels might look upon, eagerly received his "bakshîsh" and took his departure, leaving us to the guidance of the Jewish youth. As we passed through the streets upon our return, the vicious boys of Hebron followed us with yells, and then with mud and stones. In this they evidently had the countenance of the men lounging or trading in the bazaar, yet the boys took good care not to approach too near the howadjis, lest they might prove dangerous. This is the pleasant fashion of Hebron, and an attention which is extended to ladies as well as to male travelers. Would that this historic spot were in better hands! Here Abraham looked upon the stars that now glitter in the sky by night, and smiled in recalling the promise of his faithful God. Here shall yet dwell children of Abraham by faith, who shall look up to heaven from this Vale of Eshcol and rejoice in the God of Abraham. But that time is not yet.

* Those curious as to what may be seen within the Hebron Harâm may turn to the eloquent pages of the dean of Westminster. (See *History of the Jewish Church*, i. 540.)

The Arabic name of Hebron is El-Khulil, "The Friend," so called from Abraham, "the friend of God." It must be remembered that the Arabs look back to Abraham as their father through Ishmael, as do the Jews through Isaac. Hence the sanctity of the tomb of the patriarch to both races, as well as to the spiritual children of faithful Abraham.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM HEBRON TO BETHLEHEM.

WITH the morning we struck our tents and were off for Bethlehem, not sorry to leave degraded, bigoted Hebron. On the way we visited "Abraham's Oak," about two miles north-west of Hebron. It is a noble tree, one of the noblest in Palestine, the ever-green *balluta* of the Arabs; a holm-oak, Canon Tristram makes it. Its roots are surrounded by a stone-walled platform recently erected by the Russians, in whose custody it is, and by whom the surrounding land has been turned into a vineyard and orchard.* Its trunk we did not measure, unhappily, for we are in much uncertainty as to its circumference, which is given by unimpeachable authority as twenty-two feet, twenty-three feet, twenty-four feet, and so on up to thirty-two feet. As we would not discredit any one of these unimpeachable authorities, we shall not venture to estimate the girth of the Oak of Mamre, save to assure our readers that it is a grand old tree, even though it be younger than Abraham would be were he now to return to the "oaks of Mamre," as the "plains of Mamre" † were better rendered. It branches out nobly into three great boughs, and does not do

* This has been done since the taking of the picture, of which our engraving is a copy.

† Gen. xviii. 1.

discredit to its claims to eminence among the trees of the Holy Land or to its character as the representative of those oaks of Mamre under whose shade Abraham pitched his tent, entertained angels and prayed for the doomed cities of the plain of Siddim.



ABRAHAM'S OAK, NEAR HEBRON.

In a region where timber is rarely spared this noble old tree would long since have been cut down but for the veneration, amounting to superstition, with which it is regarded by Jew, Moslem and Christian. This veneration has been its security for centuries. In the winter of 1856-57 snow fell heavily all through the Ju-

dean mountain-region, and so loaded Abraham's Oak, with its leaf-clad branches (for the balluta is an ever-green), that one great limb gave way. Through the exertions of the British consul at Jerusalem the bough was cut up and transported on seven camels to that city. But it was long before the natives of Hebron could be induced to lay the axe on the sacred wood, as they believed that so sacrilegious an act would bring death to the transgressor's home. The memory of the Friend of God makes sacred all that is associated with his life or death to the people of El-Khulîl.

Taking acorns from the old oak as mementos of our visit, we moved on through the rounded vale encircled by hills toward Bethlehem. Over this road Abraham journeyed, and David and many a Scripture worthy. Joseph and Mary bore the child Jesus by this way to Egypt to escape the knife of Herod. Yet all these memories fail to make it anything but a detestable path, most trying to horse and rider.

With culture how different would this land be! Even abused as it is, flowers sparkle brightly amid the stones; and herbs, shrubs and dwarf oaks assert a right to live and bloom amid the broken terraces where once were vineyards, gardens and orchards. We pass Ramet el-Khulîl, which the Jews hold to be the true Mamre where Abraham's tent was pitched when he was visited by the angels, and ride on through a dreary region of broken, rocky hills, and of narrow valleys descending to the east, where lies the Dead Sea. This is part of the "hill-country of Judæa."

Four hours from Hebron brought us to the valley

in which are the Pools of Solomon—El-Burâk ("The Tanks"), as they now are called in Arabic. Most remarkable works these are, a wonder of ancient engineering.

In a ploughed field of chocolate-red soil lies hid a dark cavern of vaulted masonry, into which you can descend by a flight of slippery stone steps. Here you

SOLOMON'S POOLS.

find a glorious stream of crystal water pouring into a stone basin. From this underground basin it is carried by an underground channel to the "Pools." The "Pools" are three great reservoirs faced with stone, stretching eastward in succession, and each on a lower grade than that above it—reservoirs the "least of which would float a frigate." The lengths of the first, second

and third reservoirs are, respectively, three hundred and eighty feet, four hundred and twenty-three feet and five hundred and thirty-two feet, with a breadth of two hundred and thirty-six, two hundred and thirty-six and two hundred and seven, feet. From the lower end of the lowest pool an aqueduct issued, which was connected with another coming directly from the fountain, and wound along the hillsides by Bethlehem to the city of Jerusalem.

One comes to have a higher idea of the powers of the men who dwelt in Jerusalem whilst looking at these magnificent waterworks. Whether they date back to the days of Solomon or not it is not easy to decide. They may be surviving illustrations of his brilliant government. Of course these grand basins are out of repair now. Only a wiser government than that of the Turk sees to public works.

Close by the upper pool is a large, square stone-walled building, a Saracenic fort and caravanserai, but with gates barred against Christian travelers. Our noontide was wet, and it was with a forlorn resignation that, for the second time, we ate our lunch on the soggy turf beneath the wall of the khan, the rain dripping on our bread and meat. Yet we managed to have a laugh at our pitiful plight.

One of the blessed things of travel is that when all is over you forget your hardships, or remember only to smile at them, whilst you are enriched for life by that which you have seen, enjoyed or learned.

Our damp meal ended, we set out for Bethlehem, an hour to the north of us. Looking down at Solomon's Pools from the first ridge which we crossed, it was

startling to find that so far back in the world's history skillful engineering conveyed water from these reservoirs to Jerusalem. They *seemed* to lie far down in a hollow, while the temple stood on a mountain-platform twenty-five hundred feet above the sea.* But we soon struck the aqueduct, and followed it around the mountain-sides all the way to Bethlehem, to which it yet carries water, and from which it winds around the hillsides to and into Jerusalem.

We had before seen Bethlehem at a distance, resting upon the ridge, terraced and olive-clad, which pushes itself eastward from the lofty upland, but we now first entered it. The churches and monasteries which cluster about the spot held to be the scene of the Saviour's birth wear the aspect of a massive fortress; and such, indeed, they are, made strong to resist the attack of the Moslem oppressor. Two of the three gateways to the venerable church are built up, and the third is narrowed to the smallest dimensions, to be the more easily defended in case of attack.

As we rode through the streets of Bethlehem (now Beit-lahm), a village of three thousand people (some say five thousand), almost all Christians, our spirits rose and gladness filled our hearts. Sacred thoughts made the soul rejoice. After the Mohammedan bigotry of Hebron, the Christian atmosphere of Bethlehem is welcome to the traveler, even though it be a poor form of Greek Christianity which meets him. Poor as it is, it makes the streets more clean, the men

* The Pools stand at an elevation of two thousand six hundred and sixteen feet above the sea, as given by the Map of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

more frank, the women fairer and more free. The scowls of the Hebron rabble are replaced by smiling looks of welcome. The Mohammedan quarter of Bethlehem was destroyed by the rough hand of Ibrahim Pasha in 1834, and few followers of the Prophet now live in Beit-lahm.

The huge pile of clustered buildings at the eastern end of the ridge embraces three distinct and somewhat hostile convents—the Greek, the Armenian and the Latin or Roman Catholic. It was to the last that we

CONVENT OF THE NATIVITY AND ST. HELENA'S CHURCH AT
BETHLEHEM.

turned our horses' heads. The crosses on the tombs in front of the ancient church were grateful to our eyes, telling of faith in Christ—*our* Christ—and the kindly welcome to the Latin Convent which met us

at the hands of the Franciscan monks made us feel restfully at home. And who would not feel restfully at home in the spot where Jesus the Christ, the Saviour, took our nature, and for us became a babe—the Babe of Bethlehem? The sloping hillsides around spoke to us of Ruth gleaning in the fields of Boaz and of David feeding his flocks and singing "Jehovah is my Shepherd;" but even these memories paled, as stars at day-dawn, before the thought of the rising in this town of the Sun of Righteousness.

The magnetic centre of Bethlehem, around which cluster the churches and convents, is the grotto or cave which has been recognized since the second century as the scene of the Saviour's birth. The em-

CONSTANTINE'S BASILICA, CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, BETHLEHEM.

press Helena, mother of Constantine, in the year 327 built over it the basilica which now covers it. Hence

this is the oldest Christian church in the world. This venerable building, with its nave and pillared aisles that have echoed Christian worship for fifteen hundred and fifty-two years, might well attract pilgrims, but the attraction lies in the grotto beneath its choir. This grotto is reached by either of two curving stone staircases, which enter it on the right and left of its most sacred shrine at its eastern end, and is known as the Chapel of the Nativity.

It is a low vault in the solid rock, thirty-eight feet long and eleven wide. In a semicircular recess at its eastern end a silver star is set into a marble slab in the pavement, on which are cut the words, "HIC DE VIRGINE MARIA JESUS CHRISTUS NATUS EST"—"Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary."

That this is literally true we may not assert, but we may believe that this church stands over the spot where stood the house in the stable of which was born the Saviour of men. Nor is it impossible that this grotto was the cave-stable of that house.

A place more tenderly touching the heart of the Christian is not to be found the wide world over. A descent of three steps from the Chapel of the Nativity brings you to another small cave-room; this is the Chapel of the Manger, where tradition places the site of the manger in which the Babe was laid. The manger is said to have been carried to Rome.

On one of our visits to the Grotto of the Nativity we were much interested in a group of pilgrims from Russia. The men were tall and powerful, with shocks of red hair parted in the middle, and clad in long coats belted about their waists. The women were sturdy,

CHAPEL OF THE NATIVITY, BETHLEHEM.

homely and square. All were profoundly serious. And no wonder! Their simple faith had brought them all the long way from their homes in the distant North, sleeping and living on the unsheltered deck by sea and traveling on foot by land, to visit the places where Jesus was born and had died. And now they stood before the holy spot where their Redeemer first appeared to men. A Greek priest held a large volume of the Scriptures, which he rested upon the heads of three kneeling pilgrims, and read to them the story of the nativity, to which they listened with solemn awe. The reading ended, the book was laid upon the head of each of the pilgrims; each kissed it and the hands of the priest; then, kneeling, they pressed their lips to the silver star which marked the holy spot.

Another cavern room, reached by a winding passage in the rock, is memorable as the study in which St. Jerome lived for thirty years, and where he died A. D. 419. The learned recluse chose this spot that he might dwell near his Saviour's birthplace. Here he made the translation of the whole Bible from the Hebrew and Greek into Latin, that the common people of the great Roman empire might read the word of God in their own tongue. This translation, the Vulgate, is still the standard version for the Roman Church.

Of the childish traditions which show here the tomb of *twenty thousand* (!) innocents slain in Bethlehem by Herod, and other impossible localities, it were a waste of time to write and little worth to read.

Camping out is well enough in fair weather, but to get under a solid roof and within solid walls in the season of rains and storms we found by no means

painful. Our worthy friends, the Franciscan monks of the Latin Convent, did all in their power to make us comfortable. Our muleteers brought our effects into the hall of the convent. Yakoob set up his stove there, and cooked us a good dinner, which was served in the refectory of the convent. We were shown by the brethren to two large rooms, each containing four single beds. Braziers with charcoal fires to dispel the chill of the rooms were furnished us. In short, we were most hospitably treated by the monks, who accepted with modest reluctance the compensation which we made for our entertainment. The French language afforded a medium of communication between us and our hosts, none of whom spoke English.

Our morning in Bethlehem was one to be remembered long. We went into the town; we wandered through the ancient church and revisited the Grotto of the Nativity; and finally went upon the convent-roof. Would that every one of my readers might stand upon that flat, battlemented roof and look out upon that scene as it lay before us in the soft sunshine of that morning! To the west and just at our feet stretched the town of Bethlehem. Below us were the slopes, now green with young wheat, where Ruth gleaned in the fields of Boaz. (And, by the way, the women of Bethlehem at present wear long white veils, thrown back over the head, that would carry many a measure of grain.) Beyond were the stony hillsides where David practiced with the sling whilst watching his flock, and where the angels announced to the wandering shepherds the Saviour's birth. The terraced, billowy heights declined to a narrow valley. Over

BETHLEHEM AND CONVENTS FROM THE WEST.

the hills to the east rose the red mountains of Moab. On the north the sky was rimmed by a crest from which Jerusalem can be seen. On the west a village glistened in the rays of the morning sun that bathed the hill-country of Judæa. But not less pleasing was it to look over the battlement which guards the roof down into the court below, and watch the merry boys

THE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM, AS SEEN FROM THE ROOF OF THE
LATIN CONVENT.

of the Bethlehem of to-day at play until called to their studies in the school-room of the convent.

Bethlehem drives quite a trade in articles of mother-of-pearl, of olive-wood and of bitumen, which are purchased by pilgrims. The Bethlehemite from whom I made my purchases surprised me by telling me that he was at the Centennial Exhibition of 1876, held in

Philadelphia, selling trinkets. His praises of the beauty of Philadelphia and of the excellence of our people were very positive. After seeing the cities of Palestine, one would not wonder that his admiration of Philadelphia should be decided.

Those who have not visited Bethlehem are often confused in the attempt to form an ideal picture of the spot by the very different representations of the place given in engravings. The truth is, that these represent sometimes the *town* of Bethlehem, sometimes the mass of buildings formed by the *convents and the Church of the Nativity*, and hence must differ. The reader will note that at page 150 is given a view of the convents and church, and at page 159 a view of the town as seen from the Latin Convent roof. In the illustration on page 157 is given a representation of the road entering the town from the west, with the convents at the eastern end of the ridge on which town and convents stand. The situation of town and convents, and their relations to each other, are thus presented at a glance. The town stands on an elevation of twenty-five hundred and fifty feet above the sea-level.

CHAPTER X.

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM AND MÂR SÂBA.

THE exposure to which we had been subjected for two weeks now began to tell upon some of our party. Our friend Cecil was feverish and too sick to move. Mr. Chisolm and Chaya remained to care for him, and to aid him in getting to Jerusalem if he did not improve sufficiently to meet us at Mâr Sâba, whither our tents and luggage were now despatched. Favored with a glorious sunshiny day, the diminished party set out for the traditional Cave of Adullam and the Frank Mountain, to bring up by night at the Convent of Mâr Sâba beside the Kidron gorge.

From Bethlehem, go which way you will, you must descend, for it stands on a hilltop more than twenty-five hundred feet above the level of the sea. To reach the spot, five or six miles south of Bethlehem, traditionally pointed out as the cave in which David took refuge when pursued by Saul's insane jealousy, you first descend through hillside fields. So (1 Sam. xxii.) David's brethren and his father's house went *down* thither to him; for down they must go, going from Bethlehem. These fields are cultivated in grain, olive trees, lentils and vineyards. Here too, dotting the hillside, is the pretty little "star of Bethlehem," its

florets smiling in your face like stars of heaven
come down to make earth their home.

Beyond these
tilled hills you
reach more rocky
slopes, on which
the shepherds of
to-day watch their
flocks as did those
of eighteen and of
twenty-eight cen-
turies ago. They
well know what it
is to "watch their
flocks by night"
as well as by day;
and though the

STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

"lion and the bear" may not molest them as in David's day, the wolf and the hyena prowl in the darkness and robbers may come at any hour. At noon-day the shepherd-boy takes refuge from the rays of the sun under the silvery-gray leafage of the olive tree, and beguiles his time with the double flute rudely made of reeds, while his sheep rest or graze about him. Pastoral life has changed but little since the shepherd-boy of Bethlehem watched the flocks of Jesse on these same slopes.

For guide we had a sturdy Bethlehemite, clad in a sheepskin coat with the wool on the outside, and with a great staff in his hand, who strode up and down the hills with an untiring vigor and energy that were amazing. I felt for the first time—though not for the

BETHLEHEM SHEPHERD BOY.

last time in this land of strong walkers—the force of the expression,

“He delighteth not in the strength of the horse,
He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man;
The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him,
In those that hope in his mercy.” *

The “legs of a man” amount to something in Syria, forming a significant parallelism with “the strength of the horse.”

We soon passed Urtas, a romantic glen with a level floor sixty or seventy yards in width, where fruit trees stand amid the green wheat watered by a stream from the Pools of Solomon. This is that Etham which the rabbins tell us was chosen by Solomon for his gardens. The village marks the town built here “for defence” by Solomon’s son, Rehoboam.†

Leaving the glen and its green fields, we follow a ravine, then cross a rolling hill, and come upon ground more precipitous and rugged than any we have heretofore encountered.

Riding over these hills is terrible work, but the Syrian horse will go where the way seems passable only to the mountain-goat, and your nerves become inured to that which at first seemed quite dreadful. Yet as you follow the Wâdy Khureitûn south-eastward, down into its utterly wild gorge, you reach a point where your horse must be left. On foot you pass down the side of a cliff and reach a ledge of rock, along which you walk with the jutting limestone overhanging your head. A fallen rock is climbed by nicks cut in it.

* Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11.

† 2 Chron. xi. 6.

You creep along its top with the solid precipice close above you. You gain another rock, which has fallen in front of the mouth of the cave, and jump into Adullam, the Mugharet Khureitûn of the Arabs.

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM.

Once in the cave, you admit that David and his four hundred men might here hide, and, if found, defy any force to dislodge them. The narrow entrance leads, by an equally narrow passage-way, to a large hall.

—

With lighted candles we scarce saw its roof, which is arched and pillared. From this hall passages broad and high or close and low lead to other halls. All are dry and warm, but of course dark. Bats are now its only inhabitants. I should not pick out a cave for a home, but might accept one as a refuge from a Saul.

I was much interested in noticing just beyond the cave's mouth a pretty semicircular plateau, back of which the rugged rock stands as an overhanging shelter. From this rock-roof a constant supply of water drips through delicate ferns, and is gathered in two small square reservoirs cut in the rock-floor. A green sward carpets the semicircle of earth beyond the rock. My fancy pictured David's kindred spending the day on this plateau and retiring at night to the shelter of the cave. It is not likely that they abode all day in that dark cavern. Nor would his men lie in idleness there. It was their stronghold.

Whilst this cave cannot be absolutely identified with David's refuge, and its identity is disputed, its claims seem to me better sustained than those of its competitor near the Vale of Elah, where the town Adullam probably stood. It is one of the places which the pilgrim should visit to get a lively impression of a Judean cave-home.

The view eastward from the mouth of the Cave of Adullam over the Wilderness of Judæa is wild and desolate. It gives one fully the idea of a "waste, howling wilderness." We can well imagine that in such a region one who knew every mountain, cave and glen might readily escape his pursuers, as David did the relentless hunt of Saul.

After a lunch in the stony wâdy, where we found the "shadow of a great rock" a welcome protection from the noonday sun, we turned our horses, under the leading of our sturdy guide, northward over the hills to Jebel Fureidîs, "Mount Little-Paradise." This remarkable mountain stands alone, rising four hundred feet above the surrounding highlands in a cone almost as regular as that of Vesuvius, and serves as a landmark from many points far away. It is popularly known as the Frank Mountain. It is no doubt the site of that Herodium built by Herod the Great as a fortress for refuge in case of revolution, and where he was buried with great state soon after the massacre of the babes of Bethlehem by his command. We rode to the steeper part of the ascent, and then had a fine scramble on foot to the summit. Here we found a flat surface with a depressed centre like a crater, surrounded by the ruins of walls and towers. The view from this summit is glorious, embracing Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Moab and the hills of Judah, with glimpses of the blue surface of the Dead Sea. These have not been greatly changed by the passing ages, but how different was the condition of the mountain when Herod looked out from his summer palace on its top upon the buildings at its foot! Then it was a region of luxury and life, watered by an aqueduct from the Pools of Solomon; now it is a circle of ruins and desolation.

We did not tarry here long, for the day was passing and many a ridge and vale in the Wilderness of Judæa lay between us and our camping-ground near the Convent of Mâr Sâba. Our route led us across the country north-eastward.



THE WILDERNESS OF JUDÆA,

From the mouth of the Cave of Adullam, looking eastward, to the mountains of Moab beyond the Dead Sea.

We were now entering the Bedouin land. The black tents of the sons of the desert were clustered in a valley on our right, with horses and camels grazing on the scant herbage about the encampment. Here we were met by a sheikh of the Ghawarîneh tribe, engaged by our dragoman as our safeguard before we left Jerusalem. Here, too, we had the joy of meeting our companions, whom we left in Bethlehem, slowly moving toward our trysting-place, Mr. Cecil just able to travel and far from well.

Our Bedouin* guard was Mohanîmed Junior, son of Mohammed Senior, the well-known chief of the tribe. The silk keffiyeh which encircled his head and floated on his shoulders, his brilliant dress, his long lance, his mastery of lance and horse, with his whole bearing, proclaimed him the true Arab. We found him a good fellow enough, discreet, obliging and a lover of "bakshîsh." Not to be a lover of "bakshîsh"—the ever-desired "gift"—were not to be a true Bedouin.

In single file we followed our leader through the hills of this wilderness, where desolation reigns. These hills, at first rolling and shingly, with a scanty growth of grass, as we marched eastward assumed new and peculiar forms. The hills of yellowish-white chalk are cut by rain into sharp, knife-like ridges, meeting at their base in narrow, acute ravines. Broad, rugged and serrated seams of flint of an iron-rust color crop out in strong contrast with the limestone. In summer the meagre growth of spring grass disappears, and the

* Properly, Bedawy, since Bedouin or Bedawin is plural. But we keep to the ordinary spelling of the word.

region becomes truly a "waste, howling wilderness," glaring under a parching sun.

It was amid these ridges that our tents were pitched, not far to the west of the famed Convent of Mâr Sâba, and facing it and the gorge to which it clings.

As it was Saturday, we tarried here until Monday, enjoying our Sabbath rest and services and the bright shining of the March sun after the chill rains under which we had shivered in Jerusalem and Hebron.

The Kidron Valley, descending from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, here forms one of the most striking gorges in Palestine. Its precipitous sides, from four to five hundred feet high, enclose the narrow wâdy which serves as a passage-way for the waters of the rainy season. The brown and red rock is pierced with many caves where hermits once dwelt, now homes only for the fox, the wolf, the jackal or the owl and bat. One of these old hermitages abides; it is the convent that marks the spot whither the holy *Sabbás*, a Cappadocian Christian living in Palestine fourteen hundred years ago, fled from the world of strife and heresy to dwell in a cave amid the wild beasts. The monastery that grew up around this holy man, and which cherishes his grave as a precious relic, has stood here century after century, and still hangs like a wasp's nest upon the edge of the precipice, affording a home to a company of monks of the Greek Church. The convent is a rare building. Surrounded by a high and heavy stone wall, it looks more like a castle than an abode of anchorites. But it has been at times the scene of strife, siege and slaughter, and has needed strong walls. You enter it by a barred iron door in the

wall; if a *woman*, you do not enter it at all. Within you find such a series of flights of steps, passages, caves, cells, tombs and chapels as you never saw before and will never see elsewhere. But you must

MĀR SĀBA.

visit it to understand it. As you look from it down into the gorge and across to the honeycombed precipice opposite, no life is seen, save that of the sneaking jackal and of the birds of the air. Yet the sweet whistle of the black-bodied, orange-winged grackles that flit about has in it more of cheerful life than the

faces of its degraded monks, who pass their lives in a dreary round of masses, prayers, meals and sleep. Without aim, without motive, without growth, they eat their brown bread, their leeks and cabbage-soup, as stupidly as they go through their ritual. Soul seems to have departed, leaving only flesh behind. There is a valuable library here, but it is never entered by these monks. They do not seem even to need employment for the mind. It is a tomb of mind and soul.

An animated discussion between two cats, ending in blows, was the most marked exhibition of life that we saw in the Convent of Mâr Sâba. The variety was so refreshing that even our doctor of divinity, whose blood was boiling with indignation over the wasted lives of the monks, felt better for the sight.

How different from this aimless seclusion from the world, this self-seeking laziness, this unprofitableness to mankind, is the life of the missionary to this land! He goes forth from country, kindred and home, but not to bury himself in a living death. He goes to bear blessings to soul and body, to lift up the down-cast, to aid the burdened, to refresh the weary, to shed the light of God's love on this life, and to lead to the life to come. How unprofitable is self-denial for self-denial's sake! How full of glorious fragrance, beauty and wealth is self-denial for our fellow-men, springing from love to God and man!

Monk or missionary? To which shall the crown be given? To which will come the Master's "Well done!"?

Our Bedouin Arab's preparation for the night recalled a scene in the life of Saul, when the jealous

monarch was in mad pursuit of David. The king had lain down to sleep in view of the wary followers of the man whom he sought to capture. David, cautiously descending from a height to his enemy's camp, "took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster, and they got them away, and no man saw it, neither awakened."* First our guard built a slight semicircular stone wall to protect himself from the wind. His long spear was stuck in the ground at his head; his saddle served for "bolster;" his horse was picketed near by, and a "cruse of water" was within his reach. Thus, wrapped in his mantle, he slept as Saul had slept on these hills, farther to the south, at Ziph. As you journey through Palestine the people and the land constantly reproduce Bible life and bear witness to the truthfulness of Bible story.

* I Sam. xxvi.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DEAD SEA AND THE JORDAN.

AS the Sabbath waned it became evident that our sick companion would not be able to ride the next day. A messenger, therefore, was sent to Consul Willson at Jerusalem, requesting him to despatch to us a sedan-chair for his use. Monday morning opened soft and clear, making the barren ridges rosy with its genial light, but our eyes turned from time to time to the peak commanding the road to Jerusalem, on which one of our men was posted to look out for the coming of the chair. We had a long and hard day's work before us, so that it was important that we should set off betimes. Breakfast and prayers were over, our men packed the camp-equipage, our horses were saddled, yet our sentinel gave no sign. At length—and it was yet early—his hands waved to us the signal for moving, and we mounted and were off.

The sedan-chair was soon met, and our friend was made as comfortable in it as might be; but that was not very comfortable. It was properly a Persian *tak-tarawân* (a "dot and carry-one," Dr. L. dubbed it)*—a box in which one can sit, borne by a mule or horse in shafts in front and another behind. In passing over these rocky, up-and-down paths of the hill-country it

* The illustration is a Persian one, but answers our purpose well.

THE TAKIARAWAN.

could not be kept from swaying and rocking disagreeably. But it was the best that could be done, and relieved our anxiety, enabling our companion to make the day's journey with us.

Our camp-train went by the easiest route to Jericho; we were to make the circuit of the Dead Sea and Jordan.

To cross the Kidron gorge at the convent would be impossible. We first went north-westward toward Jerusalem, with the chasm on our right hand; then, reaching a place where the precipices gave way to a passable declivity, we descended to the rocky bed of the wâdy and crossed to its northern side, and then went north-east toward the northern end of the Dead Sea. On we wound through ravines and over sterile hills, pausing from time to time to close up our file. Our guard with the flowing keffiyeh and long spear made us understand, through the dragoon, that he would not be responsible for our safety from robbers if we separated from him. His Bedouin brethren are excellent men in their way, but they hold to their legal right to plunder unauthorized intruders into their territory. His presence was evidence that we were under the safeguard of their sheikh, and hence were their guests. The fact is, that travelers pay the sheikh blackmail for protection against robbery by his clan. If you enter the lands claimed by another tribe, you must in like manner buy immunity from robbery by them. Travelers who fall into the hands of these robbers are glad to get off with life and limb. One company a few years since were so thoroughly stripped by these Ishmaelites, when at the

Dead Sea, that they had to clothe themselves with copies of the *London Times* until they could reach a place of refuge and procure a better outfit. We passed a large Bedouin encampment, but the tenants

GROUP OF BEDOUIN—ADWÂNS.

of the black tents were peacefully caring for their camels and flocks.

At noon, when halfway down a long gray hill, we came upon a thoroughly biblical scene. In the rock of the hillside was a deep-hewn reservoir half full of rain-water, around which were clustered the Arab women with their flocks of goats. It was by such a well that Moses sat down in the land of Midian when escaped from Pharaoh's rage, and the daughters of

the sheikh drew near to water their flocks. And as these Arab women let down their leather buckets, and, drawing them up, poured the precious water into stone troughs for their flocks, so the Midianite maidens of thirty-three centuries ago "filled the troughs to water their father's flock." * We must believe that one of them at least was fairer than our poor weather-beaten Bedouin women, for in one of those maidens the learned and courtly Moses found a wife—his Zipporah.

In like manner was the beautiful Rebekah found for

A PASS IN THE WILDERNESS OF JUDÆA.

Isaac at the well; and the beloved Rachel was met and won by Jacob at the well whither she had come

* Ex ii. 15-17.

to draw water for Laban's flock. The customs of three thousand years ago are fresh to-day in this Eastern land.

It was noted that there was one man here to order the women who did the work. That is Moslem fashion. Two baby donkeys that were with the flocks were charming in their oddity. We wished that we might pocket the fuzzy, long-eared little fellows and bring them home for pets.

From the heights the blue waters of the Bahr Lût (the "Sea of Lot" of the Arabs) were now in full view. Apparently, they lay at our feet, sleeping in their deep-down basin amid the rugged mountains, but in reality they were still far away. We penetrated the rocky pass of Kuneiterah, and then descended from the mountain, eager to reach the long looked-for, the oft looked-at, Dead Sea.

But the way was difficult at times for our horses, and most difficult for the chair. With its *tandem* arrangement of mule, chair and mule, it seemed almost impossible to have it pass safely the short turns of the rocky defiles.

But the plain was reached at last, and with it came the arid heat of the deep-sunk Ghor.* For an hour we wound through a marly region, guttered and grooved by the torrent-rush of centuries, and then past jungles of waving cane, until we reached the beach and stood upon the pebbly shore of the northern end of the Dead Sea—the "Salt Sea," or "Sea of the Plain," or "East Sea," of the Scriptures.

I had the satisfaction of approaching the sea on

* "Ghor," the valley of the Jordan.

foot. Stopping at the cane-brake to cut a cane, I tied my Abdallah too slightly, and he improved the opportunity to leave me amid the rushes and gallop after the company. On the beach are the bleached skeletons of trees brought down

THE DEAD SEA.

by the Jordan and thrown upon the shore. To these Abdallah and his friends were made fast whilst we took in the view and prepared to bathe. From the sides and feet of snowy Hermon, one hundred and twenty miles north of us in a direct line, gush forth gloriously copious springs which join to form the infant Jordan. The stream dashes southward, tarries a while in the sluggish waters of Merom (now Lake Hûleh), and again speeds down the deepening valley to the Sea of Galilee. Here again it takes breath in the placid basin of this lake, once honored by the Saviour's presence, and then plunges downward to reach its last rest in this Sea of Death. Lynch tells us that its course is so tortuous between the two seas that its actual length is two hundred miles, though the seas are but sixty miles apart in a straight line. Through its entire course it furrows the sunken vale now called the Ghor, an unparalleled chasm which stretches from Lebanon to Edom. At the Sea of Galilee it is six

hundred and eighty-two feet below the level of the sea, whilst here it rests at a depth of about thirteen hundred feet below that level.* Jordan means "The Descender." Does not it well deserve its name? Springing in gushing fountains by Hermon, seven-teen hundred feet above the sea-level, and in its comparatively short course reaching this depth of thirteen hundred feet below the sea-level, it has a fall of three thousand feet.†

Soundings give the Dead Sea a depth below its own surface of yet another thirteen hundred feet. Thus we have here a depression, a water-filled chasm, twenty-six hundred feet lower than the ocean-surface. The sea is a basin forty-six miles in length by ten miles in breadth, into which the Jordan ever pours its stream, as do also some minor affluents, and from which there is no outlet. Evaporation from its surface ordinarily equals the volume of water received, so that its depth scarcely varies from year to year, though it is slightly increased by the spring floods.

How loaded with salts is this sea is known to all. It holds *six times* as much of these salts in solution as does the ocean, which gives it that great specific gravity for which it is famed, and also makes it im-

* Captain Wilson's survey made it twelve hundred and ninety-two feet in March, 1865. At some periods of the year it rises two and a half feet higher, and at others falls a few feet lower.

† Lieutenant Lynch of the American navy descended the Jordan from the Sea of Galilee, and explored the Dead Sea with a boat's crew in 1848, at great personal risk, but greatly to the increase of our knowledge of the river and the sea. His narrative is one of much interest.

UPPER END OF THE DEAD SEA.

possible for fish or mollusks to live in it. The old-time belief, that no living thing was found upon its shores and that no bird could fly over its deadly surface, has long since been exploded. There are spots on its shores where fountains nourish rank vegetation, and the birds fly freely over it. Yet, after all, it is a basin of desolation as well as of beauty. Death dwells within it; no life is there. The soil near the sea is encrusted with nitre and is bitter with sulphur and salt. No human habitation enlivens the shore; a sad solitude reigns. Yet the setting of the sea in the bold, richly-colored mountains on east and west, the sharp promontories that thrust their edges into the lake, with their corresponding indentations, the glistening blue of its transparent water, bestow upon it a beauty peculiarly its own, whilst the flavor of old-time history, the memories of Abraham and Lot, of Sodom and Gomorrah, gather about it an atmosphere of singular and solemn interest.

Our bath in the Dead Sea was highly diverting. To sink in its heavy waters is impossible. Float you must, whether you will or not. If you attempt to keep your feet down, no sooner do they diverge from the perpendicular than they come popping up to the surface. You seem to yourself to be made of cork rather than of solid flesh and bone, so lightly do you float upon the leaden lake. But the drawback to the luxury of the bath begins when the nauseous, bitter, acrid water finds its way into your mouth, and reaches its height when it enters your eyes. Avoid these accidents and you have a delicious refreshment. Yet, after all, who would bathe in the Dead Sea and not be able to say

just how vile it is to the taste and how unwelcome to the eyes? Not I!

“But what of the ‘Cities of the Plain,’ Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Ziboim, whose evil odor has gone up from this region through so many centuries? Is anything to be seen of them now?”

There have been writers gifted with fanciful brains or imaginative eyes who have asserted the existence of some trace of the wicked cities in rocks at the northern end, in salt-cliffs at the southern end, or beneath the blue waters of the sea. But, wherever the cities may have stood, they have utterly perished. No trace of them remains save in the traditions of the region around, and in Arabic names, such as that given to the lake, “Bahr Lût,” “Sea of Lot.” Scholars differ as to the position of the destroyed cities. To me, the Scripture facts seem to point to the plain encircling the northern end of the sea as that on which they stood when “the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.”*

Sulphur and bitumen are found in abundance on the shores of the lake. “Sulphur-springs stud the shores; sulphur is strewn, whether in layers or in fragments, over the desolate plains; and bitumen is ejected in great floating masses from the bottom of the sea: it oozes through the fissures of the rocks, is deposited on the beach, or appears with sulphur to have been precipitated during some convulsion. . . . The kindling of such a mass of combustible material, either by lightning from heaven or by other electrical agency, combined with an earthquake ejecting the bitumen or

* Gen. xix. 24.

sulphur from the lake, would soon spread devastation over the plain, so that the smoke of the country would 'go up as the smoke of a furnace,' " * as seen by Abraham when the cities were destroyed by the righteous judgment of God.

But it is time to leave the sea. So, gathering pebbles of limestone and flint from its transparent margin, and taking another full, long look down its shimmering surface, we mount and ride northward, toward the Jordan pilgrims' bathing-place.

After leaving the beach we had a fine canter over the glowing plain, gradually drawing nearer to the river on our right. Near its outlet the Jordan passes through a low and barren tract, but farther up its course is marked by a thicket of trees and shrubbery, toward which our eyes looked eagerly. It must have been a four or five miles' ride before our Bedouin guide turned sharply in through the clumps of shrubbery to the strip of wood which skirts the river, and we stood upon the bank of the Jordan.

The river has little claim to consideration on the score of majesty or beauty. Some, comparing it with the mighty streams of the New World or of the Old, speak of it in contemptuous terms. But what can be more impertinent? Is the birthplace of Shakespeare less suggestive because it is a little Stratford-on-Avon and not a Paris or Berlin? Are the old Waterloo houses of Hougomont and Quatre Bras despised because they are not equal to the palaces of Brussels? Is the Tiber less notable than the Irawaddy? Shall

* Canon Tristram's *Land of Israel*, p. 353. An interesting discussion of this whole subject will be found in this valuable volume.

we measure the Jordan by its width or estimate it by its depth? Never! It is the Jordan of sacred story, the Jordan of which we have heard from infancy and sung from childhood. It is the Jordan which has become dear to our souls by history and miracle and hymn. It is the Jordan over which Joshua led Israel

THE JORDAN.

into Canaan on dry ground; the Jordan which Elijah crossed ere he was caught up to heaven; the Jordan in which Jesus was baptized, and on whose bank—ah! could it be just where we stood?—the voice of God spoke as he looked up to heaven in prayer: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

It is in truth a stream that ill bears comparison with the glorious rivers of America, but it is Jordan.

We were at what is known as the "pilgrims' bathing-place." The river is here from eighty to a hundred feet in width, with dark clayey banks, and runs with great swiftness. At the time of our visit (March 17) it was very full, the water being almost on a level with the western bank. It was evident from the con-

THE RIVER JORDAN.

dition of the ground that it had recently overflowed its banks.

We sat down to rest in the thicket of tamarisk, poplar and cane, and, when the sedan-chair and dragoman arrived, to eat a late lunch. It was now four o'clock, and we were well tired with the achievements and excitements of the day. Some of our company bathed where we had stopped to rest, but were compelled to cling to drooping tree-limbs to prevent their being borne away by the swift current.* Others of us went farther up the stream, to where a gently-shelving beach affords a more pleasant entrance into the river as well as a better place for bathing. Moved by the example of Naaman, I immersed myself seven times in Jordan, no doubt to the advantage of the outer man by the loss of the salt of the Dead Sea. The pilgrims who yearly, at the Easter season, come hither to bathe believe the effect to go deeper, but their after lives give grounds for questioning whether their purification is more than skin-deep.

In the jungly thickets of tamarisk, willows and plumed reeds that line the river-banks the hyena, the wild-boar, the wolf and the leopard still dwell. The lion is not now found there. Birds, small and great and of many kinds, enliven the wood.

Back of the proper channel of the river is a first terrace, two hundred yards, or in places much more, in width. This is liable to be overflowed, and is enriched by the deposit of the river. Back of this is a

* In pictures of the Jordan we often see the river represented as many feet lower than it was when we visited it, and flowing at the foot of a steep bank.

second shelf of land, from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet above the first. This is covered with a gray, salty soil, much cut up by the rain-flow, and is studded with clumps of bushy shrubbery. Back of this plain the land rises to a third terrace stretching to the foot of the mountains, which here are seven miles away on the west. On the east side of the river a similar plain stretches to the foot of the Moab hills. This plain is "The Plain of Jericho" or "The Plain of Jordan." It is fourteen miles east and west by eight miles north and south. The probability is that the guilty "cities of the plain" had their location upon it. The Ghor is narrower farther to the north, in some places forming a plain not more than three miles in width. Though now for the most part a wilderness, irrigation would restore to it its ancient productiveness. The waters of the upper Jordan, now flowing into the Dead Sea, could be made to convert the Ghor into a garden.

After resting and strolling a while amid the thickets and canebrakes, we took up our line of march for Jericho, led by our gallant Mohammed Junior. As darkness settled around us we saw, far, far up the Jordan Valley, a white peak reflecting the rays of the sun, which, to us, had set. It hung like a soft silvery star in the northern sky. We started when told by Abdou that it was the summit of the snowy Hermon on which we were looking.

Weary with the way and with the excitements of the day, we plodded on over the plain, following our Bedouin leader in single file. At length the poor huts of Eriha (Jericho) were passed, its dogs barking viciously, but doing nothing worse. In the distance

the flash of a camp-fire twinkled in the gloom. Our horses stepped more briskly as they snuffed the camp, and all rejoiced when our tents were reached. We were at Ain es-Sultân—"The Sultan's Spring" of the Arabs, the Elisha's Fountain of the Christians—and on the site of the Jericho whose walls fell before the heaven-helped children of Israel under Joshua's lead at the sound of the horns. We drank freely of the water of this fountain, for we were hot and thirsty, wondering whether our Lord also drank of it on his last journey by Jericho to Jerusalem.

The sound of fresh water purling briskly over

AIN ES-SULTÂN, THE SPRING OF ELISHA.

stones was a grateful one in this dry land. And as we lay in our tents it was refreshing to hear the Palestine frogs croaking merrily away in cheery, straightforward English. These were followed by the unearthly yells of jackals, in villainous Arabic, amid which we fell asleep.

CHAPTER XII.

FROM JERICO TO JERUSALEM.

THE morning dawned fair and fragrant upon our camp in the thicket at the Spring of Elisha. The fountain gushes by several mouths from the foot of a mound, forming a little pool enclosed by stone walls, from which a stream of sweet water, slightly warm, flows eastward toward the Jordan. About it the trees and shrubbery grow thickly, affording shelter to many a feathered family as well as to the travelers' camp. The water is distributed by little channels over a limited space of land, now green with young wheat. These lands are owned by the Arabs of the miserable village of Eriha, which represents the ancient Jericho in its name, though itself a town of the era of the crusaders. It now contains about sixty families, noted for their vice and degradation. The old Jericho which was taken by Joshua stood by the fountain. A new Jericho was built by Herod a short distance (about a mile and a half) to the south; and it was this Jericho through which our Lord passed on his way to Jerusalem for the last time, and where he gave sight to the blind Bartimæus. Here also it was that his interview with Zacchæus took place. As the eye of the traveler sweeps the broad plain from the western

PLAINS OF JERICHO, WITH NORTH END OF THE DEAD SEA.

mountains, eastward to the Jordan and southward to the Dead Sea, eight miles distant, not one human habitation is seen excepting the wretched mud and stone huts of Eriha. Save the grain-plot about the village, all the plain is a desolate waste. Aqueducts are destroyed; orchards have disappeared; palaces are crumbled; towns are so utterly gone that we scarce know where they stood.

This garden-spot of nineteen centuries ago was eagerly coveted by the vile Egyptian queen Cleopatra, and was presented to her by her besotted admirer, Mark Antony, in the days of his power. By her it was sold to Herod the Great, who chose it for the site of his winter palace, and caused the new Jericho to arise here shortly before the birth of Christ.

Jericho was formerly called the "City of Palms;" now not one palm tree is to be seen here. It was supposed that they had utterly died out from the whole plain, until recently a clump of date-palms was found by Canon Tristram in one of its retired ravines. The inability or indisposition of the Turkish government to protect the plain from the robber Bedouin tribes, and its utter neglect of all that good government implies, have reduced this once rich region to desolation.

Not the least interesting feature of the Jericho panorama is the rugged brown mountain which rises boldly in the west, a thousand feet in height. It is the Jebel Kuruntul—the Arabic corruption of the Latin "Mons Quarantania"—the traditional scene of our Saviour's temptation after his baptism. The "forty days" have kept their impress on its name in "Quar-

anta," forty. Its face is burrowed with cave-cells, in which, in the olden time, anchorites dwelt in imitation of the Master. Now they are inhabited only by the bats and birds, except when some devout

MONS QUARANTANIA, NEAR JERICHO.

hermit may be found spending his Lenten forty days in one of them. Even this is rare in these degenerate times.

From Jericho there are two paths up to the Judæan hills. One leads north-westward to Bethel. It was by this that the Israelites went up to besiege Ai, and that Elijah came down, with Elisha, when about to pass over Jordan to his translation. The other road goes south-westward to Jerusalem. It was this road that we chose.

Our tents were struck, our mules loaded, and our train moved southward over the plain. The shrub-

bery and the scattered trees are wonderfully given to thorns. The *Spina Christi* (thorn of Christ), the plant which has the sad honor of association with that crown of thorns which was placed upon our Saviour's brow, here grows in luxuriant masses and to a height of twenty or thirty feet, armed all over with long thorns. The *nubk*, another thorny plant, seems to rejoice in the congenial climate of the Ghor. The balsam tree, too, has its thorns. The palm trees, the fig trees and the sugar-cane which once enriched the owners of the plain have given place to these cumberers of the ground. This is one of many sad tokens of the desolation that now overshadows this land of precious memories.

It is about a mile and a half from the fountain Aïn es-Sultân to the Wâdy Kelt, where stood Herod's Jericho in the days of Christ. Then the palace built by Archelaus flashed white in the rich sunlight of this sunny plain. Herod's circus and theatre rose among the dwellings of the city. A noble arched aqueduct brought water from the hills for its fountains, baths and pools. Palms and sycamores lined the firm-flagged Roman road by whose side sat the blind Bartimæus begging of the throngs who went up for trade or worship to Jerusalem.

Where now are palace and dwelling? All utterly gone. It is hard to believe that such a city could have stood where now all is one broad, tenantless solitude.

And now we come to a bright water-brook, running cheerily across our road and down toward Jordan. Looking westward, we find that it emerges from a

fearful chasm which divides the mountains on our right. This is the Wâdy Kelt. Dr. Robinson believed it to be that "brook Cherith" beside which Elijah dwelt hidden from Ahab, and from which he drank whilst the land was stricken with drought. This is questioned by some scholars and held by others. But this wild gorge seemed to us so fitted for a hiding-place for the prophet that we were ready to agree with Robinson, and to look with a loving reverence upon the pretty stream. So, leaping from my horse, I drank from this Cherith in memory of the favored man of God at whose word the heavens withheld their waters from a guilty people.

ROCK-DWELLINGS.

As we ascended the pass from the plain of Jericho to Jerusalem, we had this ravine upon our right. The

views down into its dark depths were as grand as they were picturesque, recalling the cañons of our American mountains. Seven hundred years ago these cliffs afforded homes to a multitude of Christian hermits. The caves in which they dwelt still open on the ravine, but they are without inhabitants, except that a shepherd may occasionally be seen leading into them his flock

VIEW OF THE JORDAN PLAIN FROM THE JERICHO ROAD.

for shelter. How these caves are reached from the summit of the cliff was an enigma to us.

A broken aqueduct and great reservoirs which supplied water to the palaces of the Herods at Jericho

bear witness to the wealth and the population that have given place to desolation and poverty.

In Palestine you see evidence on every side that the whole country must once have swarmed with an active population. No impression was more thoroughly made upon my mind than that the present condition of the land is no fair gauge of its past. The Scripture representations on this point are abundantly sustained by the evidences constantly pressing themselves on the traveler's eyes.

This Jericho road is a wonder of smoothness for a Palestine road. For its goodness we are indebted to the piety of a Christian lady, who paid to have it put in order for the benefit of pilgrims from Jerusalem to the Jordan bathing-places. It ascends by an easy grade to the Holy City, and affords many a charming backward view of the Jordan plain, so that the rise of nearly four thousand feet is overcome with little fatigue to the rider. But it passes through a wild, rocky region, well fitted to be the scene of that parable of the man who "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves," told by our Lord in answer to the lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbor?"* Many a great rock and dark ravine is there where robbers would find a fitting place in which to lurk for victims. Indeed, it has long had a bad name, and many an unfortunate traveler has here needed the aid of a "Good Samaritan" when the Good Samaritan was not there with beast and oil and wine to comfort the robbed and wounded man.†

* Luke x. 25-37.

† "The road forms a continuous descent from Jerusalem to Jericho,

FALLING AMONG THIEVES.

The story as told in the Bible had a peculiar freshness when read at noon where we stopped amid the ruins of the Khan Hadrûr, the traditional site of the parable. The way is still called "The going up of blood," but this probably refers to the color of the soil.

Beyond this khan the road is less romantic, the hills and vales taking on more rounded and bowl-like forms as you draw nearer to Jerusalem.

When not far below Bethany we came upon a bright spring flowing through an opening in a well-constructed Saracenic stone arch into a marble basin. This is Haud el-Azirîyeh of the Arabs, the "Apostles' Spring"

and to this the expression may refer: 'a certain man *went down* from Jerusalem to Jericho;' and somewhere in these rugged and lonely glens the man 'fell among thieves.' The road would seem to have been in those days frequented by robbers, and many travelers in different ages have written of it as still a place of peril and a haunt of evil-doers. One of the ladies in our company happened to linger a little way behind, at a part of the road where a sharp shoulder of the hill quickly hid her from the rest of the party. In a moment two Bedaween issued from a hollow by the wayside, who, taking hold of her donkey's bridle, tried to lead it aside into the recess out of which they had come. Knowing a little Arabic, she spoke to them and threatened them, but they insisted that she was going wrong and that they were leading her right. Her donkey-boy too seemed in a moment to become their confederate, and urged her and the donkey off the road. She shouted, but the projecting angle of the hill prevented her being seen or heard. The fellows were proceeding to force, and would have carried her off to their mountain-retreat, had not one of our number, who had been detained a little by the way, providentially come up. The Bedaween fled when he approached. But the incident was a curious corroboration of old testimonies, and an illustration of the parable already referred to, giving us one proof more, among the many, that our Lord's parables are not only most true to nature, but have actually some well-known fact as their basis."—*Bonar*.

of the Christians, as the apostles are believed to have drunk at it on their way between Jerusalem and Jericho, and the only spring this side of Jericho. It is quite possibly the En-Shemesh, "the sun-spring," of Joshua xv. 7, marking the border of the tribe of Judah. At once we rode our horses to the basin, and gave them the rein that they might drink after their six hours of thirsty travel. To our surprise, our long-speared Bedouin guide, dismounting, pushed himself rudely in among us, thrust our horses from the water right and left, and then coolly began to wash his hands and face and feet.

"Impertinent fellow! What does he mean?" was exclaimed. But, deigning no explanation, the sheikh turned aside, knelt down on the grass and coolly began his prayers.

What *did* he mean? The spring is infested with leeches. Horses drinking here get the leeches into their mouths and suffer damage. Having pushed the horses away as soon as possible, to prevent mischief, Mohammed prepared himself for his devotions by the ablutions prescribed in the Koran, and then offered his prayers.—*Moral*. Do not judge your neighbor hastily.

In fact, one or two of our horses were punished by the leeches which lodged in their mouths before Mohammed had thrust them from the water, and which were not discovered until some days later, when they had grown so as to be troublesome, and visible on examination.

Here we left the road to Jerusalem, and struck up the eastern face of the hills to reach the summit of the Mount of Olives, where we had ordered our tents to

be pitched. Our train had passed on while we tarried to rest at the Khan Hadrûr, and now our camp was in order and our tents ready to receive us as once more we looked down on Jerusalem from the sacred mount.

But in returning to this high ground, exposed to the blast of the western winds, we returned to an inclement spring. The travel of the past two days had borne hard upon our friend in the taktarawân, and the cold winds and rains which we now met on the mountain-range increased his illness. Mr. Chisolm too was attacked with intermittent fever. Medical attendance was secured, and the two invalids were ordered into the city. Mr. Warren also was far from well, but remained with the party at the camp. It was six days before our sick men were able to travel, and then Mr. Cecil could only move by re-engaging the taktarawân, in which he was carried northward.

It had not been our intention to remain so long at Jerusalem, but the time of the well members of the party was fully occupied in a more thorough study of the many places of interest in and around the city. A much longer time could be spent to advantage by one who would get an accurate understanding of its many localities of scriptural interest. To the foreign residents of Jerusalem it forms an endless field of inquiry.

CHAPTER XIII.

TOMBS ABOUT JERUSALEM.

TO understand the "rolling away of the stone" from the tomb of our Lord, or the "taking away the stone" from the grave of Lazarus, as well as other incidents in the Bible history, we must know how the Jews buried their dead. The visitor who remains any length of time in Jerusalem will have abundant opportunity for noting the ancient use of tombs hewn out of the rock. There are a vast number of such tombs in the hillsides around the city; they are found north of it, more conspicuously in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (or Kidron) east of the city, and numerous in the Valley of Hinnom on the south, as well as elsewhere in the vicinity.

A mile or so north of the city there is a fine illustration of these sepulchres in the so-called "Tombs of the Judges." There are other tombs cut in the rocks around, but these are striking from the beauty of the entrance-way and the extent of the chambers within.

To enter the tomb you make a slight descent from the road to Mizpeh, which passes in front of it. The flight of steps which once led down to it is gone. Within the portal is a vestibule which is lit by the daylight from the open doorway. In the back wall of this vestibule is a second doorway into a second cave-cham-

ber about twenty feet square. Here you must have candles to light up the darkness. With their help you find that the rock which forms the north wall of the chamber has been pierced with seven shelves like steam-boat berths, opening at the end instead of at the side, the foot facing the chamber. In each of these *loculi* a body would be laid wrapped in grave-clothes and aromatic spices. In the east wall and in the south wall doorways open into two other square chambers. Pass-

TOMBS OF THE JUDGES, JERUSALEM.

ing into these chambers, you find similar niches cut into the rock on three sides of each to receive the bodies of the dead. Stairways lead down to lower rooms, similarly cut for burial-places; so that, in all, there are more than sixty of these *loculi* or sleeping-places for the dead in this series of vaults. The labor and expense of their construction must have been great. Though their name, "Tombs of the Judges,"

has no authority, they must have been excavated for persons eminent for rank or wealth.

A half mile nearer the city lies a sepulchral cave of still higher interest, though less extensive, than that just described. It has been long known as the "Tombs of the Kings," and was supposed to be the resting-place of the Jewish monarchs. The prevalent opinion of scholars now is that it is the tomb of Helena, queen of Adiabene, an Assyrian kingdom. On the death of her kingly husband (A. D. 48, and during

TOMBS OF THE KINGS, WITH STONE AT ITS MOUTH.

the lives of the apostles) Helena took up her residence in the Holy City. Her tomb is spoken of by ancient writers in terms which well fit this catacomb. The

large number of its graves is accounted for by its being the burial-place of her descendants.

Passing through an olive-orchard, you descend by a broad flight of stone steps (only recently laid bare) to the level of the floor of the excavation. Here you find

ROLLING AWAY THE STONE, ILLUSTRATED.*

a doorway, cut through a wall of rock, by which you enter a court ninety feet square, open to the sky, whose smooth-dressed walls belong also to the native rock. Turning to the west wall, you see a vestibule, whose architrave was once elegantly carved, and still shows the clusters of grapes upon its frieze, although the two pillars which supported it are gone. In the south wall of this vestibule is the door of entrance to

* This cut does not exactly reproduce the doorway of the Tombs of the Kings, which is oblong, not circular, but illustrates well the "rolling away of the stone." The doorway and stone are depicted accurately on page 214.

the tomb proper. This entrance is deeply interesting to the Christian traveler, for it carries his thoughts irresistibly to the grave where was laid the body of the slain Saviour. Originally the door was approached by an underground passage, but this passage is now open above, so that it is reached with ease. This entrance-way is simply an oblong opening through the solid rock into the vaults beyond. But just before this door is a groove in the rock, slightly descending on the right. A great circular stone, like a millstone, was rolled along this groove so as entirely to cover up and close the door. There was also a stone slab, sliding at right angles to this circular stone, which acted as a bolt to secure it in its place.

The circular stone now stands at the door, rolled back in its groove from the opening, and wonderfully lighting up the question of the women on the resurrection morn: "Who shall roll us away the stone

GROUND-PLAN OF TOMBS OF THE KINGS, OR TOMB OF HELENA.

from the door of the sepulchre?" Coming to the spot, "they saw that the stone was rolled away, for it

was great." No small effort would be called for to push back such a stone even if not bolted.

You enter with lighted candles, and find, as in the Tombs of the Judges, a square room, and connected with it chambers with walls pierced in rows of resting-places for the dead, leading to other chambers similarly cut, all giving evidence of unlimited wealth devoted to the construction of sleeping-places for the dead that should never be disturbed. Vain hope! Nothing movable remains in these stripped and desecrated sepulchres.

Coming nearer to the city and turning eastward, you enter the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or Kidron (as it is variously called), and find tombs, ancient and modern, in abundance. The Mohammedans bury mainly upon the west of the ravine, under the temple-wall. The Jews bury on the eastern slope, all along the base of Olivet, especially about the Tomb of Zechariah, which is esteemed a spot especially sacred and desirable for the dead.

The striking monument known as the Tomb of Absalom has been so often pictured that its form has become familiar to untraveled eyes, and is greeted by the traveler as an old acquaintance. We are told that "Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the King's Dale; for he said, 'I have no son to keep my name in remembrance.' And he called the pillar after his own name; and it is called unto this day Absalom's Place." * The Jews, believing this to be that Pillar of Absalom, as they pass spit at it and cast at it a stone. The conse-

* 2 Sam. xviii. 18.

quence is that its base and a considerable part of the pillar are covered by the stones which express the

indignation of the Jews at the ungrateful son who sought to dethrone his father, the great King David. The part above ground is about forty feet in height. Its lower portion is the solid rock of the hill, which has been cut away from it; its upper portion is of masonry. It has been broken into,

PILLAR OF ABSALOM, JERUSALEM.

with the hope of finding treasure, no doubt, so that you may climb in and examine its structure. On entering I found nothing, yet as much, perhaps, as those who first broke into it. I had the satisfaction, however, of making this exploration without meeting the mishap which befell another traveler, who was caught in this trap by some rascally Arabs and robbed, with no possibility of resistance or escape.

The style of the carving of this monument makes it entirely unlikely that it belonged to the age of David, though probable that it may have stood here by the side of the Kidron when our Lord passed the valley on his way over Olivet. If so, his eyes may often have rested upon it. Whether Absalom's Pillar stood

on this spot before this monument was cut it is impossible to say. If it did, the traditional name would readily attach to the later structure.

The "Tomb of Jehoshaphat" (undoubtedly falsely named) opens just behind the Pillar of Absalom, but is blocked up with rubbish. A little below the Pillar of Absalom the Tomb of St. James, with its porch and columns, faces the Kidron; it is a cave-tomb forty feet deep; just south of it stands the Tomb of Zechariah. This last is a very striking monument. It is part of the native rock of Olivet, the rock around it having been cut away to leave it in bold relief. For whom or when these structures were cut or carved no one can tell.

Still farther down the valley come other tombs cut out of the rock, and Silwân (Siloam) is a town of tombs, though the living have expelled the dead, taking possession of their homes.

It is strange that of all the structures of eighteen hundred years ago the homes of the dead alone should remain. It is a symbol of the death and burial of the pride, the glory and the riches of that people who drew on themselves the just anger of God, killing his Son, and crying, "His blood be on us and on our children!" But the day will come when they shall turn again to the Lord, and again dwell in his smiles, rejoicing in his favor. The Jews shall yet acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. "And so all Israel shall be saved."*

Under the city itself may be visited a vast cavernous labyrinth cut out in the solid limestone rock on

* Rom. xi. 26.

which Jerusalem is built, but not for purposes of burial. It is the quarry from which was taken the building-stone for the edifices of ancient Jerusalem. The entrance to this artificial cavern is under the north wall of the city, not far to the east of the Damascus Gate. It is but a hole in the rock on which the wall is built, through which you stoop to pass. Sliding down a steep descent into the darkness, you light your candles and soon find a better walking surface. Then you walk on and on, through an almost endless series of rude rocky chambers, separated from each other by shapeless pillars supporting the ceiling twenty or thirty feet over your head. As you advance you descend, sometimes quite suddenly. Your head soon becomes utterly bewildered by the labyrinth of cavern-rooms through which you wander amazed.

The stone is of a cream color, and soft when first cut, but hardens on exposure. The great blocks which were set in the temple-walls no doubt came from these quarries. Broken stones and small fragments lie in great heaps upon the floor, just as they were left by the masons of long ago, the imprint of whose tools still marks the rock. It would be as unsafe to attempt to thread these underground excavations without a guide as to pass through the Catacombs of Rome alone. With a guide it is most interesting and suggestive to do so.

Josephus says that many of the Jews took refuge in these quarries at the capture of Jerusalem by Titus. Their situation and entrance were unknown for centuries, having been discovered quite recently.

So long as the weather was fair our camp on the

summit of Olivet was charming, both in itself and in its unspeakably rich associations. Looking eastward into the sunken valley beyond the hills in which Bethany nestles, you see the waving line of green which marks the passage of the Jordan. Farther to the south the still waters of the Dead Sea gleam silvery or blue as the sunlight may fall on them or not, while the brown hills of Moab rise beyond as a strong background to the picture.

Turning our faces westward, we have before us a panorama that does not need history to make it impressive. On the right the rounded hill of Scopus stretches northward; on the left sinks a valley with rolling hills enclosing it; in front and at our feet, deep down, is the Kidron ravine; whilst before us lies Jerusalem.

I had often read descriptions of this scene, but the reality has proved it more noble than I had imagined. Olivet is more bold in its descent, Kidron is more thoroughly a ravine, Jerusalem is more brilliantly displayed, than I had supposed.

But let us walk down this western declivity of the Mount of Olives. The way is steep and the path stony. No doubt there were better paths eighteen hundred years ago, but we are treading in our Master's footsteps. He descended this mountain; he looked across this ravine and up at yonder city. It was from the road, a little to our left, that he beheld the city and wept over it. Here, somewhere down this slope, was the Garden of Gethsemane. It may have been within the enclosure into which we look, whose venerable olive trees, rugged with centuries of age,

mark the traditional site. It may have been just here where we stand. Let us sit down at the root of this goodly olive tree, sheltered from the wind and warmed by the sunshine, and recall the anguish of Him who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. His anguish was the seed of our gladness, his grief of our joy. He carried our sorrows that we might receive his bliss. Now he is risen, and sits at the right hand of God, our Saviour, our King. His humiliation is far in the past; his exaltation is now and for evermore. Gethsemane is precious, but we rejoice that it is never to be repeated.

We look over into the city. It is spread before us—literally *spread* before our eyes. We can count its domes, minarets and towers—almost count its every house. In front of us is the leveled top of Moriah, once crowned with the temple of the Lord, now with the Mosque of Omar and the Mosque El-Aksa. The city-wall supports this “temple-area,” which has an eastern face of fifteen hundred and thirty feet and a width of more than a thousand feet. Within the Mosque of Omar, and underneath its dome, is the rocky summit of Moriah, where stood in Solomon’s time and in the time of Christ the altar of burnt-offerings. See those dusky clouds that this moment drift across it! You would almost say they were the smoke of the offerings on the altar. But no need is there now of offering for sin. Christ has suffered for sin, once for all.

Back of Moriah the higher hills of Zion and of Acra rise, and so regularly that each building overtops that before it. You count eight domes of church

Ciadel. South Wall El-Aksa. East Wall. Mosque of Omar. Top of Pillar of Absalom.
JERUSALEM FROM THE DESCENT OF THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

or synagogue, and as many towers and minarets. The houses are built solidly of stone of a creamy color, and are capped with low domes like inverted saucers or with flat mortared roofs protected by parapets. You trace the city-walls on the north to the Damascus Gate, and on the south over Mount Zion, while right across the city rises the square Tower of David at the Jaffa Gate. Beyond the wall to the north-west the buildings of the Russian consulate, church, hospital and pilgrims' houses form a striking feature in the scene. You may travel far before you will find a more brilliant view of a city from without. It may be studied over and over, and still it fascinates you by the unique character of its beauty. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion." Such it must certainly have been in the day of its glory.

But the sound of wailing comes from down the slope of Olivet. It is the voice of Jewish mourners at the graves of their dead. Two men are reading prayers, whilst the women rock to and fro beside the tombs and utter their grief in penetrating outcries. It may be that it is a formality, but those shrill, quavering wails touch your heart and move your sympathies. As you listen you imagine why it was that Jesus wept with the Jewish weepers at the grave of Lazarus. It would be easy for you to weep with these wailing women, strangers though they are to you.

Yet, though Zion mourns, all is not gloom or grief in Jerusalem. To the Christians this was a gala-day, and men and women, boys and girls, were out in their best, enjoying the sunshine on the mountain-side. The

women wore white robes over dresses of brilliant hues; the little girls were gorgeous in pink and blue and orange. Groups clustered under the olive trees, eating and chatting, making pictures full of Oriental coloring. Across the valley men were dancing to the music of the pipe. It was pleasant to see tokens of gladness in this desolated land.

Then, again, in sadder contrast, were the beggars sitting by the wayside and appealing for alms—the old, the blind, the crippled. Just such was the appeal of that lame man who was healed by Peter and John at the gate of the temple.

But our old friend, the stormy west wind, was not yet willing to forsake us; on March 19th, as the sun sank below the hilltops, his blasts began to blow heavily upon our tents perched upon the mountain-top. They quivered and shook, they rattled and fluttered. As the night advanced the thunder first muttered, then rolled grandly over our heads. Next came hail and snow, and then great dashes of rain. The water began to make its way over our earthen floor. At one o'clock our poor muleteers were forced to turn out with their hoes and dig a trench around each tent to turn the rain-flood aside, whilst we lifted our goods to dry quarters, making merry over the situation. Our cook was in a sorry plight, for his tent was flooded, yet he gave us as good a breakfast of steak, omelette, coffee and Jerusalem bread the next day as if all were serene, or as pilgrims could require. Yakoob is a jewel. Nothing can prevent his giving us comfortable meals. But his tent was moved to a drier spot, that his difficulties might be kept within measurable limits.

In the afternoon it was decided that the five travelers still in camp should move to a small Russian-Greek convent close by, which happily was unoccupied. Abdou made all the arrangements, and had our beds and bags carried to this convent-building; our meals were still served at the camp. This arrangement proved excellent. In our upper room at the convent, white-walled and stone-floored, with three good windows opening eastward, we slept peacefully. From it the view down into the Valley of the Jordan and across to Moab's mountains was an ever-varying yet ever-glorious panorama, a constant delight. After our excursions to the city and the country around we returned to rest on the divan and to repose in quiet, far removed from every city sound. Our grateful thanks are due to the worthy people, whosoever they may be, whose piety erected our convent home on Olivet.

Our last Sabbath was a charming day. On its evening we gathered about the table in our "upper room" and remembered our Lord in the breaking of bread. It was our last evening in Jerusalem the earthly. May it be ours to meet in "Jerusalem the golden," there to behold in person Him who died on Calvary for sinners and ascended from Olivet to sit at the right hand of the Father!

CHAPTER XIV.

NORTHWARD FROM JERUSALEM TO SHILOH.

THE voice of a bird trilling out its matin lay awoke us with its music to our last morning in Jerusalem. We had slept in our tent, that we might be ready for the start and might enjoy the sunrise from the top of the tower near the Church of the Ascension. It was a glorious last view.

Early as it was, the Arab women were already at work at their mills in the huts of El-Tûr as we passed on our way to the tower. The little sparrows too were

WOMEN AT THE MILL.

up, twittering and chirping on housetop and tree, while a long train of ravens streamed dark against the yet dull sky on their way to the city, as we gained the top of the tower. As we looked eastward a line of pink and orange glory stretched along the horizon; next gleams of golden light flashed out; and then the

orb of day was revealed, banded by cloud-lines, rising with huge diameter over Moab's mountain-wall. The leaden surface of the Dead Sea grew silvery. Even the scarred and scored hills of the Wilderness of Judæa assumed a warmer color under the sunlight. The deep valley of the Jordan caught the light; Jericho was touched by the rays; Bethany, too, rejoiced in the rising day. †

But turn and look westward, for it is the morning sun that brings out Jerusalem in all its beauty when beheld from Oli-

SYRIAN SPARROWS.

vet. You have seen it all before, but now it wears new glory. The Mosque of Omar, El-Aksa with its dark cypresses, the bright-green dome of the synagogue on Zion, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the walls, the minarets and towers of Jerusalem, glitter with a fresh interest. And well they may, for you are about to leave them! Beyond, you gaze on Scopus, its rounded slopes checkered with white and red and dotted with trees; on Mizpeh's lofty summit, on Jebel Fureidis to the south, and over the whole rolling sea of vales and hills enriched by the footsteps of prophets, kings and apostles, and of the Lord of prophets, kings and apostles. These are those

“ Holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
Which [eighteen] hundred years ago were nailed,
For our advantage, on the bitter cross.”

The bugle sounds from Antonia's Castle as it did when Pilate governed there. The church-bells ring out the call to prayer. White-robed women pace slowly down the path from Zion. Men in soberer garb move to their returning toil. Jerusalem is waking to its daily life; it bids us remember the present and turn to our tents to make ready for departure.

All is bustle at the camp. Tent-pins are drawn and tents are struck; beds are rolled up; kitchen furniture and table furniture find their places in the chests; portmanteaus are bundled together. Everything is packed, and finally everything is loaded on the all-enduring mules. A taktarawân is on hand for our convalescing friend Cecil. We mount and are off for the north.

The long train of riders and heavily-packed mules paced along the ridge of Olivet and over Scopus. Around us were fields of red earth, some newly ploughed, others green with young grain. We were now within the limits of the territory of “little Benjamin.” We descended from the elevated ridge to a valley stretching northward, with hills to the right and left. Scarce one of these hills but has a history recalling Bible times. It is wonderful how these sites are clustered, each with a train of associations linked to words which we have read from childhood onward.

We were hardly out of sight of Jerusalem when we passed the rounded hill on which stood Nob, where

the Edomite Doeg slew the priests of the Lord at the bidding of Saul, because Ahimelech received David and gave him the shew-bread and the sword of Goliath.* A little farther, and off to the east, on the end of a ridge, is a village called Anâta. That is the old Anathoth, the birthplace and home of the prophet Jeremiah. But an hour from Jerusalem, and you have a terraced hill on the right of the valley, with rough

TULEIL EL-FÛL—GIBEAH OF BENJAMIN.

ruins on its summit. It is Tuleil el-Fûl ("The Hill of Beans"). On it stood long, long ago a town called Gibeah of Benjamin and later Gibeah of Saul. There Saul, the first king of Israel, lived, and thence he ruled over the twelve tribes. Here took place the hanging

* 1 Sam. xxi. 9-19.

of seven of Saul's family after the kingdom had passed from him, on the demand of the Gibeonites, whom he had wronged. On this hill occurred also that touching, long-drawn scene of sadness when Rizpah, mother of two of the slain men, "took sackcloth and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest [in May] until water dropped upon them out of heaven [at the season of autumnal rains], and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night." * Little wonder is it that when David heard of this ceaseless watch of the bereaved mother over her dead through all the long, hot summer months he was moved to order their respectful burial in the land of their fathers.

It was on this hill, and in the valley to the east of it, that David and Jonathan met with hearts linked by love. A few miles to the west is the lofty Neby Samwîl, the Mizpeh where Samuel dwelt, which we visited on our way by Beth-horon to Jerusalem; and to its north is Gibeon of the Gibeonites. In plain sight before us is another hill, with a village on its top. The country-people call it Er-Râm. It is about six miles north of Jerusalem. There is little difficulty in finding in it the successor of the ancient Ramah of Benjamin. Ramah means "a height;" hence the many Ramahs in a country that has a height to every square mile. This Ramah had the honor of being the birthplace of Samuel. Here it was that the little fellow who was to become so famous spent his childhood until he was old enough to go to Shiloh to attend upon the aged Eli in the tabernacle.

* 2 Sam. xxi.

We ride through Ramah, and four miles farther we reach El-Bîreh, a Moslem village of seven hundred inhabitants, with strong fountains pouring forth noble streams of water. You learn how precious a gift is water when you travel in these Eastern lands. This is the ancient Beeroth ("wells"), one of the cities of the Gibeonites before Canaan was conquered by the Israelites. Two miles farther and you are at Bethel, now Beitîn.

All these sites are compassed in your ride from Jerusalem, after breakfast, to your noonday rest at Bethel. Is it not true that memorable spots cluster thickly in this land of Benjamin? And how small is the territory of "little Benjamin"! At Bethel we have already reached its northern limit. In fact, Bethel belonged to Ephraim, being the southern border-town of that great tribe.

Bethel is a noted name in history. Abraham made his camp just east of Bethel while yet it was known as Luz. It was at Bethel that Jacob lay down to sleep, with a stone for his pillow, when flying from the justly-angered Esau. He would not have far to look for such a pillow! The armies of all Europe could readily find pillows enough for every soldier of their myriads at Beitîn. Somewhere on the hillside the anxious, homesick Jacob found a sheltered spot, and, wrapping his mantle about him, lay down with a stone for pillow, shielding his head with his turban. As his weary, troubled eyes closed on the terraced slope rising step above step to the starry sky, there came in dream to him the vision of a stairway "set on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven." On it

angelic forms passed between earth and heaven, while the voice of the great God whispered to his anxious soul, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed; and, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest." What wonder that when he awoke he cried, "This is none other than the house of God," and called the place Beth El, "the House of God"!*

It may be that some who sing with devout feeling Mrs. S. F. Adams's hymn, commencing, "Nearer, my God! to thee," have failed to catch its full force by not associating it with this event in Jacob's life. Note its significance—

"Nearer, my God! to thee,
Nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me!
Still, all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God! to thee,
Nearer to thee!

"Though like the wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone,
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God! to thee,
Nearer to thee!

"There let the way appear,
Steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me,
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God! to thee,
Nearer to thee!

* Gen. xxviii.

“Then, with my waking thoughts
Bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God! to thee,
Nearer to thee!”

On his return from his long stay with Laban, Jacob buried here at Bethel that nurse of Rebekah, Deborah, whose name has been handed down to us with honor through thirty-six centuries. What an estimable woman must she have been that her burial in her old age should have given the title *Allon-bachuth*, “the oak of weeping,” to the place!*

Six hundred years later Samuel held his court here in passing through his judicial circuit. But Bethel gained greater prominence than ever—a bad prominence—in the days of Jeroboam. To alienate the people from the worship at Jerusalem, he built a temple here, setting up a golden calf as an object of worship for the ten tribes whom he had riven from Judah.

The prophet Amos said, “Bethel shall come to naught,” and it has come to naught. A more forlorn spot it is not easy to imagine. The city that once crowned the hill with its strong walls has given place to a handful of wretched huts, mere heaps of stones and mud roughly piled together. The magnificent stone reservoir, more than three hundred feet in length by two hundred in breadth, is broken. The springs that filled it and made it a storehouse of wealth to the fields below now run to waste. Poor Bethel has come to naught!

* Gen. xxxv. 8.

We sat down amid the gray stones to rest and take our lunch while our horses grazed in the grassy bed of the broken reservoir. Then we wandered through the village, seeking to imagine the past. But it was not easy to bring the past before our eyes with the reality of the pitiful present filling them. The women of the village were washing clothes at the fountain. Some fig-orchards there are, but the unprotected earth has been washed away by centuries of rain, leaving little save hills of white and gray stones behind.

The prophets who denounced God's judgments upon Beth-el as the tempter of Israel to idolatry changed its name from Beth-el, "the house of God," to Beth-aven, "the house of vanity," referring to the "lying vanities," the idols there worshiped. So Hosea (ch. x. 8) wrote—

"The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed;
The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars."

Here, as in so many places in Eastern travel, you find the prophetic denunciations upon sinful cities and nations literally fulfilled. God judges nations in this world, for here only do nations have their life. It is not safe for a nation to despise the will and the word of the Almighty God.

It may be noted here that the land is not beyond repair as to its water-supply. The rainfall in Palestine from October 15 to April 1 is large. If the great ancient reservoirs were restored, the old tanks and cisterns renovated and the aqueducts rebuilt, the country would be well watered and fruitful once more. It is the sin and neglect of men, not the withholding of the

waters of heaven, that have impoverished this once prosperous land. "A fruitful land maketh he barren for the wickedness of them that dwell therein;" and their wickedness is the agent of their own impoverishment.

North of Bethel we traverse the territory of the great tribe of Ephraim, and find better lands than those of the south. These hills and valleys only need the care of a good government and a moral peasantry to make them smile with fruitfulness as of old. The ride is a pretty one between terraced slopes planted with the fig, the olive or the vine up to the very summits of the hills. True, stones abound, yet trees and vines find rich soil between them, for the waste of the limestone rock enriches it. You see here pleasant evidences of the thrift of the farmers, who lessen the number of the stones in their fields by throwing them into the road. This serves also to give an agreeable exercise to your horse and to prevent his going to sleep; he is kept very wide awake by the incessant necessity under which he is of picking his way amid these millions of stones of every imaginable size and shape. If there were any wheeled vehicles in this land, we might suppose that the farmers were interested in the prosperity of the wheelwrights. As there are not, we must conclude that it is enterprise rather than benevolence which leads to the making of the highway the receptacle for loose stones from the fields.

Part of the way the bed of the ravine is taken for the road. Here no help is needed from the farmers, for the way is simply outrageous with jagged rocks and stones. Yet the grades are excellent, calling

only for reasonable care and labor to give decent thoroughfares.

Emerging from this gorge, you reach a pretty spot where a level, grassy plot of ground spreads in front of a wall of rock, down which water trickles from a spring above. The terrace is green with ferns and sward and dotted with flowers, forming a charming place for rest or camp. But it has a bad name—Ain el-Haramîyeh, “the Robbers’ Fountain.” Its name is worse than its character, for no robbers now mar the comfort of the traveler through these vales of Ephraim.

After leaving El-Haramîyeh the country wears a more pleasing aspect. Again we must speak of the profusion of pretty flowers that deck hillside and valley. These are a constant delight to the traveler. Especially is he charmed with the ever-smiling anemones, of every shade between white and crimson. As these first attracted his eye on the Plain of Sharon, so do they continue to delight him all through his journey. But the anemones are not alone. Many sweet flowers keep them company in the cheer they give to all who have hearts sensible to beauty.

As evening approaches we turn off from the highway to the left, and climb a steep ridge to where a mountain-village looks out from its eyrie upon a valley green with young corn. This is Sinjil, and here is our camp with tents pitched and the American flag flying. Mules and horses are tethered to a long rope fastened at each end by a peg driven in the ground. Our dog Jack is kept in a lively state of excitement by his efforts to put to flight the village dogs, who

catch the scent of our provisions and intrude upon his domains. Conscious that he is backed by cook, waiter and dragoman, muleteers and howadjis, Jack is the bravest of the brave. He dashes brilliantly upon the canine intruders, who prudently withdraw, equally aware of the reserves behind this skirmish-line. At night the jackals add their voices and visits to those of the village dogs. Among them all there arises, on many a night, such a concert of howls, yelps and barks as sorely tries the patience of the would-be sleepers in their tents. With such Syrian serenades they would willingly dispense if they might.

Sinjil, for a wonder, has no biblical associations, its name speaking of the crusaders rather than of the Hebrew kings or prophets. Raymond of St. Gillies camped here on his march to Jerusalem, and the "St. Gillies," changed to Sinjil, commemorates the event. It is a town of eight hundred inhabitants, standing on a bold cliff overhanging a pretty plain. We look across this plain with deep interest, for on an opposing hill to the north-east is Seilûn, the site of old SHILOH.

Among the famous places of the world Shiloh holds no mean rank. Far back in history, seven hundred years before Rome was founded, Joshua gathered there an assembly of the twelve tribes at the tabernacle of the Lord, which was set up in this central position. A commission of three men from each tribe was appointed to make a survey of the land west of Jordan, and to divide it into portions for the tribes not yet provided with homes. "And Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, 'Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come

again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the Lord in Shiloh.' And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh. And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord; and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions." *

It was from Shiloh that the troops furnished by the tribes to whom land had been assigned east of Jordan returned to their homes and fields when their brethren in the west had received their territory and the seven years' war was ended.† Here too occurred that romantic episode of the carrying off of the maidens whilst at their dances by the wifeless Benjamites when their tribe had been almost destroyed.‡

The position of the place is so exactly described (in Judg. xxi. 19) that it cannot be doubted that the Arabic Seilûn represents the Hebrew Shiloh.

It was hither that the boy Samuel was brought to wait upon the venerable high priest Eli. The ark abode here three hundred years, until that sorrowful day when it was carried forth with the army to battle against the Philistines. It never returned. The Israelites were defeated, Hophni and Phineas slain, the ark taken, and the aged Eli, unable to survive the shock, died at the news. Shiloh, ceasing to be the religious centre of the nation, fell into decay, never to rally again. The worship of God had become a form; the power of godliness had ceased, and Shiloh was suffered to fall into ruin as an admonition to all churches in all

* Josh. xviii. 1-10.

† Josh. xxii.

‡ Judg. xxi.

ages. Jeremiah warned Israel by the fate of Shiloh: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these.' . . . But

SEILÔN—SHILOH.

go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel." *

God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

With the morning we came down from our high-perched camp at Sinjil into the pretty plain at the foot of the hill. A shepherd-boy was *leading* out his flock of goats and sheep—not *driving* it—to the pasture. He trod barefooted, yet firmly, over the rough hillside and through the wet grass; on his head was a close-

* Jer. vii. 4, 12.

fitting cap; his outer garment was the coarse striped 'abeyeh worn by the peasantry, and his rod was in his hand. With sharp calls he bade his flock follow him closely. If one strayed from the path or straggled behind, a stone was thrown near it as a hint. If the hint was not heeded, or the sheep turned into the wheat-field to nibble the tender but forbidden grain, a swiftly-whizzing stone sent with keen aim would give it a more forcible reminder and bring the offender limping after the flock.

Our ride through the fertile plain gave us a glimpse of one part of Oriental husbandry little changed since the days of the Judges, as the peasants were busy ploughing their lands. Fields, I was about to say,

THE SYRIAN PLOUGHMAN AND PLOUGH.

but it must be remembered that no hedge or fence divides these plains, which stretch in an unbroken sweep. Little heaps of stone are the landmarks which

separate the lands of different owners. In some sections of the plain the wheat and barley were beautifully green; in others the ploughmen were turning up the red soil. Yet it is scarcely proper to say "turning up" the soil, for the soil is but scratched by these Syrian ploughs. The plough is very light—so light that the laborer carries it home on his shoulder at the close of day. It is the same rude, simple affair that we see painted on the Egyptian monuments of three thousand years ago. It has an iron tip on its share, which serves its purpose in this easily-tilled soil, and can wander among the stones the better that it does not pretend to uproot them. The yoke for the oxen is as light as the plough. Rude as these implements are, they seem to answer their purpose very fairly.

Note this first ploughman. He wears a blue turban on his head, the long end of which flutters in the wind; his white frock (not so *very* white, however) is girt about his waist by a red sash. He must give close attention to his work, for his plough needs to be steadily held to keep it in its proper position. Having put his hand to the plough, he must not look back. In one hand he carries his goad, which at its butt is armed with a flat, chisel-like iron for scraping the earth from the ploughshare, and at its point with a sharp tip, against which it will be well for the oxen not to kick. They would find true the admonition addressed to Saul of Tarsus: "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." The oxen are little creatures, as are all the cattle we saw in Syria—just about large enough to draw the little ploughs. The plough-

men are social in their habits, following one another closely in parallel furrows. The reader will remember that when Elisha was called by Elijah he was "ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth." * We were pleased to be able to count *fourteen* men ploughing in this plain. This is partly, no doubt, for society, but more largely for protection against marauding Bedouin.

The rounded hill of Shiloh lay before us as we rode through the plain amid the ploughmen. The city has gone; the tabernacle has gone; the people who went up to worship God have gone: the hill alone abides. But my thoughts ran back to the day when the pious Hannah fulfilled her vow by bringing her boy from Ramah (which we passed the day before) to present him for the service of the Lord in Shiloh. It was not difficult, in imagination, to see the loving mother, proud of her noble Samuel, half glad, half sad to sur-

render him, treading the path we followed, the little fellow trotting cheerily at her side. He stops to fill his chubby fists with the bright daisies, buttercups and anemones that dot the wayside with beauty. He would like to chase

THE HOOPOE (*Upupa*).

the lapwing that flits before him in the path; he turns at the soft "hoop! hoop! hoop!" of the crested hoopoe

* 1 Kings xix. 19.

that is perched in the fig tree on the right. So, with laugh and prattle, he trots on until the foot of the mount is reached. How proudly thankful would the mother have been could she have foreseen the eminence of greatness and goodness to which her boy would attain!

There was more to attract the eye in Shiloh than than now. Little can be seen, and yet the rounded summit on which it stood is most interesting from the history which clusters about it. Rocks, and stone houses reduced to stone-heaps upon the rocks, cover the face of the hill. There is a space artificially leveled where the tabernacle may have stood, and two cisterns from which Samuel may have drawn water for Eli. The deep ravines on two sides of the mount, with hills rising ruggedly beyond them, were the very ravines and hills on which the brave soldier Joshua, the gentle high priest Eli and the pure judge Samuel looked over and over again. The tabernacle in which they worshiped is no more, desolation wraps the lonesome hilltop, but the God whom they adored lives for ever—our God, God the Spirit, to be found anywhere by those who worship him in spirit and in truth.

On a slope just south of Seilûn is a ruin, evidently ancient and rebuilt in later times, but it has no association with the past to make it worthy of special note in this land so rich in sacred memories.

CHAPTER XV.

JACOB'S WELL AND SHECHEM.

WE turned our horses' heads away from Shiloh's desolate hill with a silent thoughtfulness. Most truly has "its glory departed." "Ichabod" is written on its ruins, which speak of what it has become in its downfall rather than of what it was in its days of prosperity. But our eyes were soon lifted, for now our way lay through a pretty vale where silver-leaved olives stood amid the green corn, and where the smoothness of the road permitted us to indulge in the luxury of a canter. After resting under a noble holm-oak (*balluta*), and then ascending and descending a hard hill, we came out into the richest plain we had seen since entering Palestine—the Plain of Mukhnah. It stretches to the north as far as Mount Ebal, a carpet of green grain unbroken by fence or hedge, but banded with brown stripes of new-ploughed land, and here and there dotted with fig, olive and mulberry trees. In our own country such a stretch of fine farming land, seven miles long by two broad, would not excite remark, so richly are we blessed with plains as fertile and vast in their extent; but after the sterile mountains of Judæa and amid the rugged mountains of Ephraim the Mukhnah kindles

warm admiration. Ploughmen were at their work, and villagers passed to and fro. Yet not a house was to be seen in all the plain. High up on the western hills rested the villages in which the tillers of the soil dwell. From these villages they must go to their fields, miles away, in the morning, and to them they must return in the evening. Afraid to live in the plain, they cluster in towns for mutual help and protection.

When Jacob returned from the far East with wives, children and herds, he made his first tarrying-place where this plain meets the Vale of Shechem. Perhaps the fact that his father's father, the great Abraham, erected here his first altar to Jehovah in the Land of Promise* may have influenced Jacob in his choice. But it will not be very uncharitable to suppose that the rich pasturage of the plain had as strong an attraction for this thrifty man. Just at the northern end of this plain he purchased a camping-ground,† that he might have a right to soil enough to dwell upon; and though the Vale of Shechem abounds in flowing fountains, he there dug the well that still bears his name, so that he might have unquestionable right to water for his family and servants, his flocks and herds.

Coming from the south, you continue up the plain of Mukhnah until Mount Gerizim faces boldly upon it on your left. Passing the eastern front of Gerizim and looking westward, you see at a glance the Vale of Shechem, running east and west, with Mount Gerizim on the south and Ebal on the north. Just where you turn is Jacob's Well. Gerizim and Ebal, it will be

* Gen. xii. 6, 7.

† Gen. xxxiii. 19.

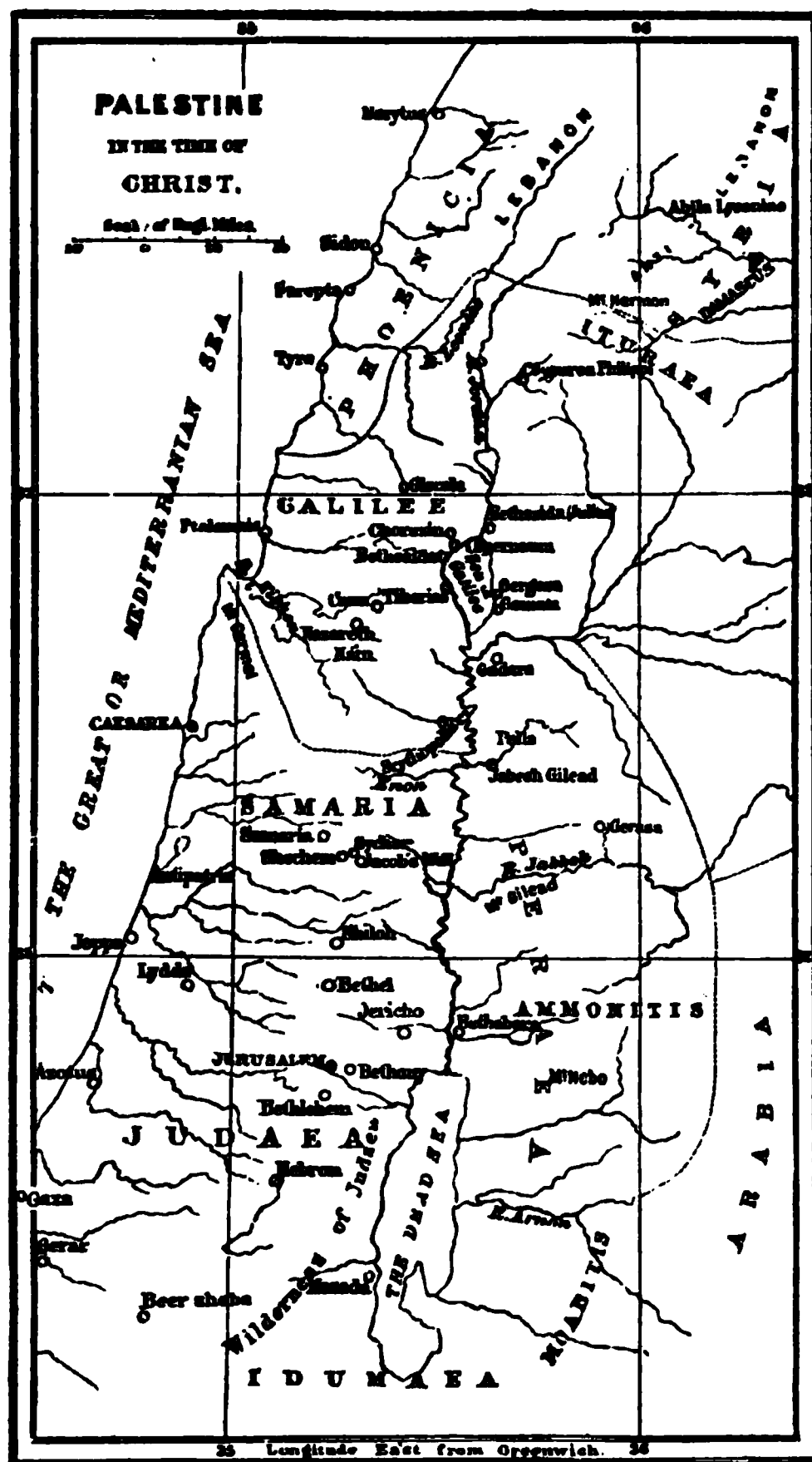
noted, are lofty parallel ridges, with the narrow Vale of Shechem between them. Gerizim stands two thousand eight hundred and forty-eight feet above the sea, and Ebal three thousand and seventy-six feet. At the eastern opening of the vale is Jacob's Well; a mile to the west is the city of Nâblûs, replacing the old Shechem and lying at the foot of the ridge of Gerizim. About a half mile north of Jacob's Well is a village called Askar, probably the Sychar whence came the "woman of Samaria" with whom our Lord held converse as he sat by Jacob's Well.*

Jesus had been in Jerusalem at the Passover season. He had cleansed the temple of those who profaned it with their buying and selling, and then turned his face northward, accompanied by his faithful followers, that he might teach in Galilee. It was usual for the Jews to cross the Jordan and travel through Peræa, the land east of the river, so as to avoid the abhorred Samaritans, whose country lay between Judæa and Galilee. But Jesus had good reasons at this time for passing through Samaria and encountering the hate and bitterness of its people, to whom the Jews were as odious as were the Samaritans to the Jews.

It will be remembered that the mixed people of Samaria were treated with disdain, as not true Israelites, by the Jews, and in return tried to prevent the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem after the Captivity. From these beginnings of strife arose a feud which grew more and more bitter from age to age, so that at the time of Christ "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans." Indeed, when the Jews came

* John iv.

from Galilee through Samaria to attend the Passover it was not uncommon for them to be attacked by these



bitter enemies. Sometimes many lives were lost in these conflicts.

But our Lord had a message for some of these very

Samaritans. There were chosen ones of God in Sychar who were to be led by him to a knowledge of the truth, and so to eternal life. No doubt Jesus took our route from Jerusalem. He came by Bethel, left Shiloh on his right (for it is off the main road), walked through the green expanse of the Mukhnah, and reaching Jacob's Well, "wearied with his journey," sat there

whilst his disciples went to the town to buy provisions. So it fell out that the Samaritan woman, coming to draw water, found the water of everlasting life. The people of the town, too, moved from their enmity to the Jews by his wondrous teachings,

JACOB'S WELL: ITS OUTER OPENING.

"besought him that he would tarry with them; and he abode there two days."*

No locality in Palestine is more absolutely identified than this of Jacob's Well. Jews, Samaritans, Mohammedans and Christians agree that here is the very well, dug by Jacob, beside which Jesus sat and held that wonderful discourse. Hence this spot has few rivals in interest. Yet it is a disappointing site. Upon a small knoll, beside which are broken walls and columns, you come upon a hole—in the earth, apparent-

* John iv.

ly—really in the vaulted roof of a room ten feet square below the surface of the ground. You look down into this little room and see a pile of stones. But where is the well? The well is underneath that pile of stones. A portion of the roof of the small vaulted building which covered the precious well has fallen in, and the stones have choked up the mouth of the well. Letting myself down into the chamber, I peered through the crevices between the stones and saw—

JACOB'S WELL: WITHIN THE VAULT.

nothing! To assure myself that this truly was the well, I dropped a stone, and, listening, heard it strike below. So late as 1838 the well was one hundred and five feet deep; now it is only seventy-five feet deep. Rubbish and the stones dropped in by inquisitive

travelers account for the diminution of its depth. When my readers visit Palestine they will please dismiss all inquisitiveness and abstain from thus testing the well.

With the helping hands of two of our company I regained the ground above, not without regret that this interesting spot should be in so neglected a condition. Yet this is better than that it should be spoiled by being enclosed in a church, surrounded with tawdry finery and turned into a place for self-righteous pilgrimages by Greek or Roman Christians. Old ruins are preferable to the superstitious gewgaws of the modern "holy place."

A few hundred yards to the north you find, amid the fields, a little whitewashed enclosure within which is a tomb. Who is buried here? Turn to Joshua xxiv 32, and you read: "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem." That this little *wely* * covers the tomb of the great and good Joseph there is every reason to believe.

But the generous clouds begin to shed their riches on field and tomb, and the falling flood does not exempt us from its favors. So, dressed in our rubber suits—most useful companions!—we turn westward and ride between craggy Gerizim on our left and the loftier Ebal on our right, by the Vale of Shechem, into Nâblûs. Shechem was a city of refuge to manslayers in the olden time. Though not manslayers,

* *Wely* is the name given to the whitewashed and domed shrines built over the tombs of those recognized as saints by the Moslems.

we should have appreciated an open door in some hospitable home as we walked our horses through the straight central street of the town, but we found none opening to us. So on we rode, clattering over the stones and stared at by shopkeepers, and passed out of the city by its western gate. Our tents were pitched on a piece of level ground above the valley, beneath the steep ascent of Gerizim. It is probable that we were quite as comfortable in them as we should have been in a Nâblûs house. The average Syrian house is so populous with insects not named in polite circles as to be an undesirable resting-place. We did not altogether escape these lively little fellows even by dwelling in tents. As Shechem was a noted city from the time of Abraham down to the day when Solomon's foolish son Rehoboam was crowned there, so is

GERIZIM, WITH NÂBLÛS AT ITS FOOT.

Nâblûs now the most important and most populous town of Palestine north of Jerusalem. It has a charming position in the narrow vale between Ebal and Geri-

zim. The vale is watered by gurgling fountains, feeding rivulets of which one runs eastward, and another, with the water of most of the springs, westward, bearing verdure and fruitfulness into the lower grounds on both sides. The flow to the west forms a little stream which crosses the Vale of Sharon and enters the Mediterranean Sea. Gardens of olives and pomegranates, of walnuts and lemons, mingle with fields of wheat and barley, clad in spring-time with soft verdure.

Large quantities of soap are made from the olive oil produced in the neighborhood, which is held to be the best oil in Palestine. The antiquity of this trade is shown by huge mounds of ashes heaped up without the town. Its bazaars are thoroughly Oriental, being excelled in this respect only by those of Damascus.

The old Shechem was replaced at the time of the Roman conquest by a new city called, after the emperor Flavius Vespasianus, Flavia Neapolis. Under Arab rule the Flavia was dropped and Neapolis changed to Nâblûs, the name now borne by the town. Its population is reckoned variously at from ten to eighteen thousand. Mr. El-Karey puts it at twenty thousand, of whom eight hundred and thirty are Christians and one hundred and seventy Samaritans, and the remainder Moslems. The special interest of the present city gathers about the little remnant of the Samaritans found within its walls. These are the lineal and only surviving descendants of the race who have dwelt in this land from seven centuries before the birth of Christ onward. They now number less than two hundred.

We were scarcely off our horses when we were called upon by the Rev. Youhannah El-Karey, a native of Nâblûs, educated in England, and now a Baptist missionary in his native place, where he is doing a good work through schools, Bible-class and preaching. Mr. El-Karey kindly offered us his services as our guide, and as the rain had ceased we were glad to accept his offer. He was especially helpful in leading us, by devious ways through dark alleys of questionable odor and vaulted streets of odor unquestionable, to the Samaritan synagogue in the south-western part of the city, where the Samaritans make their homes.

Their synagogue is decidedly more famous than elegant. In fact, it is a mean little place, though unique in interest. Its small room is rudely arched, whitewashed and lit by a skylight. The gem which gives value to this rude casket is the venerable "Samaritan Pentateuch" lodged here. It has been the habit of the high priest to guard this precious treasure so carefully that a more modern roll is shown to travelers and declared to be the very copy of the five books of Moses written by the grandson of Aaron. If this deception is detected through the information of the visitors, a second roll is shown whilst the venerated original is still kept hidden. Of course Mr. El-Karey was too well informed to be thus cheated. For a moderate bakshîsh the high priest brought the sacredly-cherished treasure of the synagogue from a cupboard behind the veil and exhibited it to us. It is kept in a silver case of Venetian workmanship which is wrapped in a silk scarf. It is writ-

ten on sheepskin parchment, and is rolled upon two rods, so as to present by unrolling the successive columns to the eye of the reader. How old it is no one

THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.

knows. The five books of Moses are the entire Scriptures of the Samaritans. They reject all else, as belonging to the hated Jews and not truly inspired.

The Samaritan high priest of to-day is a man of thirty-eight to forty years of age, tall, slender and handsome. His eyes are dark and his expression soft yet intelligent. His son, an olive-faced boy, quite charmed us by his beauty. Father and son are fine samples of a national type of two thousand five hundred years' endurance, now almost extinct.*

* To students of Bible history these Samaritans cannot fail to be an

The Bible-reader will recall, among other references to this spot, one of memorable importance narrated in the book of Joshua,* when all Israel stood in this vale, six tribes under Ebal and six under Gerizim, to say "Amen" to the blessings on the keepers of God's law, and to the curses on those who should despise and break it. It has been found, by actual trial, that in a commodious recess forming an amphitheatre near the eastern end of the valley the voice of a speaker can be heard by an assembly on the opposing hillsides.

The parable of Jotham, uttered from Gerizim to the people of the town below,† will also be remembered, but must not be given here. The story fits in admirably with the localities. When on the ground you can easily imagine the bold speaker addressing the people below from a cliff back of the town, and then flying before he can be reached. Here, as everywhere in Palestine, the Scripture stories tally with the land so absolutely as to assure us of their truthfulness.

interesting study. The curious will find an instructive account of the keeping of the Passover by them on Gerizim, in Dean Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*, First Series, Appendix III.

* Josh. vii.

† Judg. ix.

CHAPTER XVI.

SAMARIA—DOTHAN—JENÍN.

THE beautiful saddle in which Nâblûs sits like a queen, guarded right and left by craggy Ebal and Gerizim, is a watershed from which streams flow both eastward and westward. In going to Samaria, which is but eight miles away to the north-west, you first pass down the most delightful valley you have yet seen in Palestine. A rippling stream makes a music rare and refreshing in this land, shedding beauty on the vale, even though the reservoirs built long ago to retain and distribute its water are going to destruction. Here and there a grist-mill stands beside the stream, with wheel and stones moved by its flow. The trees are abundant and of noble growth. Indeed, the olives alone are worth a journey to see, so venerable are they, sometimes with two or three trunks from one root, or with suckers growing beside the parent stem, recalling the promise to the godly, "Thy children shall be like olive-plants round about thy table."

As we went westward down the valley, women met us, coming up the road with great loads of wood skillfully poised on their heads. The noble carriage of many of these Syrian women is noticeable; the habit of bearing burdens on the head from childhood up

NYBLDS (SHECHEM), FROM THE WEST, WITH MOUNT EMAL ON THE LEFT AND MOUNT GERIZIM ON THE RIGHT.

makes them thus erect. Next came five camels in a string, loaded with boxes slung on each side. As they swung along, treading softly with their leathery feet, with head thrust out, drooping lower lip, and great black eyes gazing inquiringly upon the strangers, we looked to see of what their load consisted. We read with entertainment the marking on the boxes, which told us that it was petroleum from Pennsylvania coal-oil refined in Philadelphia, sent to burn in the lamps of Shechem and Jerusalem and Bethlehem!*

Flowers bloomed by the roadsides and birds flitted among the trees, whistling their glad welcome. There are boys too in this land, and "boys will be boys" in Nâblûs as well as elsewhere. An owl, half blinded with the broad daylight, pursued by a hawk, took refuge in a tree; in the tree he was attacked and driven out by crows; flying farther, he lit in another tree, only to be pursued with stones by these Syrian urchins, who saw his trouble.

From this valley you strike across hills of limestone banded with seams of brown flint to reach the site of Samaria. Omri, the king of Israel who chose the spot for his city (B. C. 925), showed excellent taste. An oval hill five miles in diameter stands out amid the encircling mountains, from which it is separated by valleys. It rises four to five hundred feet above the

* America is furnishing light to Syria in more senses than one. Indeed, the extent to which the illuminating oil penetrates its towns and villages may be taken as an illustration of the quiet force with which the gospel light from the mission-work is pervading its society. Scarce a village can be found in the Lebanon or in Palestine in which American astral oil is not purchased and used. In 1879 one million five hundred thousand gallons were imported at Beirût alone.

plain, and is so finely shaped as to be beautiful to look upon viewed from almost any side. Its summit affords a charming prospect, taking in many ancient villages

THE LITTLE OWL OF PALESTINE (*Athene Persica*).*

on the tops of the surrounding hills, and reaching to the yellow sands washed by the Mediterranean Sea near Cæsarea. The sides of the hill are terraced to the top, and well covered on the southern side with olive-groves. On its level summit pillars still stand as tokens of the palaces and temples of Samaria, which once glittered in the rays of the rising and setting sun. Ahab's bad memory comes to you, recalling the fact

* There are five species of the owl found in Palestine, but by far the most abundant is the *Athene Persica*, or little owl. From his low, crooning cry he is called the *boomah* by the Arabs.

that that pitiful monarch built in Samaria a temple to Baal to please his stronger and viler wife, the Phœnician Jezebel.* It was through the influence of this Sidonian queen that Samaria became the centre of a grosser idolatry than that of Jeroboam. Thus was

SEBUSTIËH (ANCIENTLY SAMARIA), FROM THE E.-N.-E.,
with the mountains of Ephraim behind it and the Mediterranean Sea
in the distance.

brought upon the guilty city the just chastisements
of God. Hosea prophesied (xiii. 1),

“Samaria shall become desolate,
For she hath rebelled against her God.”

And Micah (i. 6) declared in the name of the Lord,

“I will make Samaria as a heap of the field;
I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley,

* 1 Kings xvi.

All the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces,
And all the idols thereof will I lay desolate."

Most thoroughly have these threatenings been made good. Samaria has become desolate; her stones have been literally rolled into the valley; her graven images and the temples in which they abode are gone. Secure as she stood on her hill in the days when artillery was yet unknown, the judgment of God reached the proud and wicked city, and she is "as a heap of the field."

Halfway up the eastern face of the hill is a village of sixty houses called Sebustieh. Its houses, built of the fragments of nobler dwellings, cluster around the ruins of a church built by the crusaders in honor of John the Baptist. An old tradition led them to believe (mistakenly) that John was imprisoned and beheaded here. In fact, you are shown his tomb beneath the church. The name Sebustieh has come to us from the days of Herod the Great. That famous builder changed the old Israelitish Samaria into a magnificent Roman city, to which he gave the name Sebaste, in honor of his patron, Cæsar Augustus—"Sebaste" being the Greek equivalent of the Latin "Augusta." Herod designed it to be both a stronghold and a means of perpetuating the memory of his greatness. Amid the grain on the terraced side of the hill Corinthian columns are now standing. They are relics of the double colonnade which adorned a royal avenue. To know that this colonnade was three thousand feet in length (as Porter says; more than five thousand feet, Conder says) gives us a suggestion of the brilliancy of this "city set upon a hill" in the

days of our Lord, and when "Philip preached Christ" there, assisted by Peter and John.*

After wandering over the area on the summit of the hill, where the pillars of an ancient temple speak of former grandeur, and enjoying the glorious view, we descended to the grand colonnade, and thence to the

HEROD'S COLONNADE AT SAMARIA, NOW SEBUSTIEH.

valley which surrounds the hill. How we were to emerge from this valley, and where we were to penetrate the mountains on our northward march, it would have been hard for us to tell. But our guide quietly led us upward and onward, threading the labyrinth with confidence. It was all plain to him. We passed the village of Burka, perched in a sheltered nook of the mountain, and then crossed a rough ridge by a

* Acts viii.

path that would suit the wild goats well, and which was passable even for our horses, but most trying to our mules heavily laden with camp-equipage, as well as to the soft-footed camels that we met toiling through the rugged, rocky defile. One could not fail to wonder at the change from the day when the Syrian Naaman came in his *chariot* to Samaria. A chariot—nay, a wheelbarrow—would collapse and fall apart in despair at the idea of passing over such a road as this now is.

But there are rich valleys too in this region of Samaria, and towns on the hilltops, with fields of pulse and grain, and with orchards, about them.

In the afternoon we came out upon a plain of rich meadow-land. It is a crescent-shaped plain, hill-encircled, unbroken by fence or hedge or wall. Not a house enlivens its broad, still expanse. Bright flowers bend their heads and wave their crimson, pink, blue, yellow and white petals to the breeze. Some of them are old friends; others are unknown to us, but all look kindly upon us. On the farther side is a hill, steep, but not very high. At its foot is a grand well, with a building enclosing it. There is a large water-wheel, and a watercourse to carry the water to the fields. We look about us on well and plain with a rare delight. This is Tell Dothan—the Dothan to which that Joseph whom we have loved ever since, in childhood, his story fell upon eager ears, wandered in search of his brethren. No wonder that the sons of Jacob led their flocks and herds hither, for it is a charming plain. The pasturage would suffice for even their thousands of sheep, of goats and cattle. The well, too—and

there must have been *two* noted wells, for Dothan, or, more properly, Dothaim, means "two wells"—would certainly attract them.

What boy or girl, not to speak of older people, would not rejoice to look out from Tell Dothan over this plain? Poor Joseph! Here it was that his brethren plotted against him. "They saw him afar off"—coming over the plain—"and said one to another, 'Behold, this dreamer cometh!' Come now, therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit."* And here it was that they stripped from the poor lad his coat of colors, the hated mark of their father's partiality, and thrust him—heedless of his pleadings for mercy—into a pit to die. Over the plain before us departed the Ishmaelites to whom they sold him, relieving themselves of the burden of his blood upon their consciences and putting silver in their purses at the same time. Thrifty men were these!

From the hill we looked out over the plain, imagining the scene, when, lo, by a happy coincidence, a train of camels and merchantmen came moving over the well-trodden highway from Egypt to Gilead. Whether the brown bags piled upon their camels were filled with "spicery, balm and myrrh" I cannot say, but they helped to make real to us the story of Joseph and his brethren at Dothan.

We did not come upon the pit into which Joseph was cast, but Lieutenant Anderson reports finding here some of those bottle-shaped, cemented cisterns so common in Palestine, and so well meeting the demands of the Bible story.

* Gen. xxxvii.

Later in Jewish history Dothan appears as the residence of the prophet Elisha. It will be remembered that Benhadad the Syrian encircled the hill with his army, that he might capture this troublesome prophet, but that the host was smitten with confusion of sight and led away from Dothan to Samaria.* The reply of Elisha to the "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" of his terrified attendant, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them," has become one of the watchwords of the Christian life. It first rang bravely out at this Dothan.

Three hours of travel bring us to the northern verge of the Samarian hills. Here, where you may look off upon the great Plain of Esdraelon, stood in the olden time the Levitical city of En-Gannim, the "Fountain of Gardens." With that amazing unchangeableness which characterizes Eastern names of places, En-Gannim still survives in the Arabic Jenin, a town of three thousand people. The citizens of Jenin are not of the best repute, even though blessed with a Turkish governor, soldiers and custom-house.

Just outside of Jenin we found our tents and all of our attendants, from Chaya and Yakoob down to the donkey Ginger-pop and dog Jack. Glad were we to see them and to go into camp, for the day had been a wearying as well as interesting one.

Yet before dining we feasted our eyes with long looks over the Plain of Esdraelon, so often trodden by armies and so often watered with human blood, to

* 2 Kings vi. 8-23.

Gilboa on the north and Carmel on the west. Nor was the look into Jenîn without its attractiveness. The town rises up the hill toward the east, and has a mosque with a pretty minaret and dome. Since leaving Egypt we had not seen so many palm trees in one place as waved their

MOUNTAINS OF GILBOA FROM JENÎN.

plumes over the houses of Jenîn. A magnificent fountain furnishes an abundance of water, which nourishes groves of orange trees and of other fruit trees. Its old name, En-Gannim, "Fountain of Gardens," still finds its justification in fountain and gardens.

But Jenîn has a bad repute as to its inhabitants. The governor furnished us a guard of Turkish soldiers for the night. Poor fellows! So miserably are they paid that they are delighted to earn a little money by thus watching the tents of the howadjis. During the night we had an alarm of robbers, and were awaked by the firing of our guard. This, with the noise made by our attendants, the outcries of the dogs of the town and of the jackals, and the vigorous replies of our own dog Jack, gave us a disturbed night. However, a good supply of cold water in the morning is a wonderful freshener, and water is abundant in Jenîn, if good morals are not.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PLAIN OF JEZREEL: GILBOA—JEZREEL—SHUNEM—NAIN—TABOR.

THE Plain of Jezreel, or of Esdraelon (the Greek form of Jezreel), fills so large a place in history that we will take a glance at it before calling for our horses to cross its broad surface to Jezreel, Shunem and Tabor. It is a conspicuous gap between the mountain-region of Samaria, over which we have come, and that of Galilee, to which we go. Looking out from the verge of the mountains of Samaria at Jenin, the valley stretches before us as a triangle, pointing westward, to the narrowed neck through which the river Kishon flows by the small plain of Acre to the Mediterranean. Across to the Galilean hills on the north it has a breadth of fourteen miles. Following these hills to the west, the line is twelve miles long. The blue hills of Carmel, rolling in waves of light and shade to the north-west, form a third side of the triangle, eighteen miles long. On the east two prominent ridges thrust their gray rocky lines into the plain—Gilboa (Jebel Fokua), on the south, and Little Hermon (Jebel Duhy) farther north. Thus at its eastern side the plain is broken into three valleys, of which the central, the Plain of Jezreel, descends in rapid and verdant slopes past Bethshean to the Jordan.

From our outlook at Jenin, as the eye moves north-westward it rests on the sites of Taanach and Megiddo on the northern slope of Carmel; looking north, it catches Gilboa, with Jezreel at its western foot, but can only know, without seeing, that Shunem is at the foot of Little Hermon, the old "Hill of Moreh," and that Nain and Endor are on its farther side, with

PLAIN OF JEZREEL, OR ESDRAELON.

Tabor still beyond. These old sites are represented by poor villages, but on all the plain not a hamlet, not a house, is to be seen. The village of Fuleh can hardly be said to be on the plain, as it stands on a hill. Until recently the land has been so devoured by lawless Bedouin marauders, who came from the East at

harvest-time, like the Midianites of old, with their camels, horses and goats, that the peasants have dared to till little of its rich red soil. Indeed, travelers could not cross it without a military escort. But within two years capitalists of wealth in Beirût have leased it from the government on condition of government protection for their farmers and crops. The result is, that at the time of our visit (1879) a large part of the plain was under culture. The soil is volcanic, a rich red tufa loam that well rewards the husbandman's toil. Wheat, cotton, tobacco, millet and other crops are abundant, but trees there are none.

To detail the great battles that have been fought in this vale, which separates the mountains of the south from those of the north and affords a highway for armies, would be out of keeping with the purpose of this volume. Many of these battles will be readily recalled by the reader of the Bible. He will remember the victory of Barak and Deborah over Sisera, whose forces were gathered near Taanach on the southern edge of the plain, where his iron chariots could be used with effect; and the signal defeat of the Midianites and Amalekites (the Bedouins of that day) by Gideon and his picked three hundred; and the overthrow of Saul and his sons, with their sad death on Gilboa's rocky slope, sung so plaintively by David. Then, near the close of the Judæan monarchy, came the battle in which an Egyptian army, intent on the invasion of Assyria, was attacked by Josiah on the plain, and the king of Judah, "sore wounded" by the Egyptian archers, was borne to Jerusalem in his chariot to die there. In later times (A. D. 67), when Ves-

pasian and Titus were engaged in the conquest of Palestine, the Roman general Placidus decoyed the Jewish garrison from the castle on Mount Tabor into this plain and slaughtered it. And finally (A. D. 1799), the French general Kleber, under Napoleon, with three thousand men fought and routed thirty thousand Turks at the little village of Fuleh.

Truly it has been a battlefield for all ages, from the earliest recorded in history down to our own day. The Revelation, in figure, uses its Megiddo as a type for the final battlefield, the "Ar-Mageddon," or mountain of Megiddo (Rev. xvi. 6), where God's friends and foes shall join in a last struggle for victory, and where sin and sinners shall fall before God and truth.

But our tents are struck. As they fold their wings and disappear we are reminded of the parting from our earthly tabernacle. How speedily the houses that have sheltered us dissolve!

Our little caravan moves down through the groves of Jenin to the plain. Abdou rides first, then follow the six howadjis, also on horseback, with our seventh, though improving, still carried in the taktarawân. A huge muleteer astride of a diminutive donkey goes before the chair as a guide, and a second marches on foot beside the foremost mule with broad leather sandals that drop on the path like the feet of a camel. Our retinue numbers ten more men, with fourteen mules laden with tents, furniture and stores, and our valorous donkey and trumpeter, "Ginger-pop," our inseparable companion, for he is the bearer of our midday meal and our water-bottles.

We first struck across the plain to the western foot

of Mount Gilboa, which lay immediately before us. It was a surprise to me to find Gilboa not a peak or hill, but rather a short mountain-range running north-west and south-east, with several gently rounded tops; I counted seven of these summits. It is a barren ridge of gray rock, in strong contrast with the fertile vale from which it rises so boldly.

The well-defined track over the red soil invited us to a brisk gallop, which was highly enjoyable as a variety to the slow walks amid the stones of the mountains we had traversed. After crossing this southern arm of Esdraelon, lying between Jenin and Gilboa, we found in front of us a gentle ascent to a rounded hilltop, a foothill pushing westward from Gilboa into the plain. The ascent, whilst gradual from the south, on the north drops precipitously to the Vale of Jezreel below. On this hilltop is a miserable Arab village called Zerin. It is the ancient Jezreel. Yes, this is the spot on which stood Ahab's palace. Here Jezebel concocted her villainous plan for the judicial murder of Naboth, that Ahab might get hold of his vineyard. The vineyard, no doubt, was just below the rocky knoll of Jezreel.*

You look eastward along the pretty vale and imagine Jehu, who has been anointed king and commissioned as punisher of the house of Ahab, driving his chariot furiously toward you from over Jordan, followed by his devoted clansmen. Ahab is dead, but Joram, his son, goes forth and meets Jehu, asking, "Is it peace, Jehu?" An arrow from the bow of Jehu carries the answer to Joram. The arrow smites him to

* I Kings xxi.

the heart, and his body is cast into the field of Naboth.* So perished the bad son of a bad father. And the mother, the Sidonian Jezebel who reigned here! Mayhap just where you stand stood the palace from whose window she looked out with "painted face and tired head," and said to Jehu, "Had Zimri peace who slew his master?"

"Throw her down!" cried the fiery Jehu from his chariot; and her own chamberlains hurled her from the window to the pavement, her blood spattering the palace-wall.

In this "portion of Jezreel" did dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel, as Elijah had foretold, for when they went to bury her they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands.† Remembering how utterly the horse which we saw lying under the wall of Jerusalem was made away with by the city dogs, it was easy to understand the fate of Jezebel. Nor are the dogs of Jezreel extinct. As we rode over the hilltop they came upon us, barking ferociously, apparently eager to treat us whilst yet alive as did their forefathers the body of the dead

* 2 Kings ix. 23-26: "And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah. And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the Lord laid this burden upon him; Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the Lord; and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the Lord."

† 2 Kings ix. 30-37.

Jezebel. Syrian dogs are no respecters of persons, living or dead.

Many skeletons of cattle that had died of want from the failure of the rains lay upon the hill, and the great griffon vultures which had helped to strip them of their flesh soared about us in sweeps of magnificent flight.

This vulture, the griffon (Hebrew, *nesher*), is the bird frequently spoken of as the "eagle" in our English

GRIFFON VULTURE.

Scriptures. Thus, "They shall mount up with wings as eagles" (Isa. xl. 31); "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, as swift as the eagle flieth" (Deut. xxviii. 49); and, "Saul and Jonathan were swifter than eagles" (2 Sam. i. 23),—all refer to the *nesher*, the *nissr* of the Arabs of to-day, as do many other passages in which the word "eagle" is

used. Our low idea of the vulture as a bird of filth is not to be applied to this griffon, for, though a feeder on carrion, it is an eagle in flight, long life and strength.

We picked our way down the steep declivity on the north face of the hill of Jezreel, where black basaltic (volcanic) rock makes its first appearance, and followed a pretty little streamlet eastward along the Valley of Jezreel to the Well of Harod. Here Gideon had his camp* before the battle in which the host of Midianites and Amalekites and all the children of the East, who "lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude," were so utterly defeated. The water of this "well"—rather fountain—flows abundantly from out a cave immediately under the crags of Gilboa, forming a pool three hundred feet across, in which black and red kine were standing at midday, and in which our horses waded with great satisfaction. The outlet runs eastward to the Jordan. It was pleasant to believe that it was from this pool that Gideon's picked heroes drank, carrying the water in their hands to their mouths without getting down upon their knees, as their comrades did. The pool is now called Ain Jâlûd, "Spring of Goliath," from an old notion that Goliath was here slain by David. The panic-stricken Amalekites fled down the valley, past Bethshean, to Jordan, seeking to make good their escape to the great eastern plain beyond the river, from whence they had come with their camels and herds.

It was hereabout that Saul was defeated and fled up the side of Gilboa, there to die by his own hand.

* Judg. vii. 1.

Endor, whither he went to consult the witch on the night before his last battle, is on the northern face of Little Hermon (Jebel Dûhy), originally known as the Hill of Moreh, which forms the northern wall of the Vale of Jezreel. As the Philistines were camped near Shunem, toward the west end of Jebel Dûhy, Saul must have reached Endor by passing around the eastern shoulder of the mountain.

As we do not intend to follow his course, we will turn westward and gallop over the treeless, houseless valley to Shunem, three miles from Jezreel, to the north-west. But have an eye on the ground ahead, for there are many holes in the red soil, apparently from its being undermined by water, where your horse may have a foot caught and give you a fall. Abdallah's skill in dodging these holes, even when on a hard gallop, was quite admirable, and excused certain infirmities of temper which manifested themselves at times, greatly to the discomfort of the company. But shall we ask our Syrian horses to be free from infirmities with so few advantages of a moral nature as they enjoy? That certainly were most unreasonable.

The pretty land-shells scattered by the wayside induced us to dismount and gather them. A loose fragment of mosaic pavement, too, caught my eye as we rode over the plain. From whose house did it come? It is a long, long time since Roman mosaics were laid in the houses of the Valley of Jezreel.

As we approached the south-western slope of Little Hermon, we saw before us, a little way up the hillside, a miserable village of mud huts, with hedges of coarse cactus. On the housetops, terra-cotta pipes laid in

mortar served as hives for the bees which bring thither honey from the flowers of Esdraelon. This mean Arab village was once a favored spot. It is Sôlam, formerly Shunem. It is the place where dwelt the "great woman" and her husband who made "a little chamber on the wall" of their dwelling, and set there "a bed and a table and a stool and a candlestick," for the entertainment of that man of God, Elisha, when he passed that way, as he often did. It was in the fields below, at harvest-time, that the good woman's boy fell under the hot summer sun, crying out, "My head! my head!" The child was carried to his mother here at Shunem, only to die on her lap. But Elisha's prayers availed to draw power from God to raise the dead.*

Now the place has little to attract the traveler aside from its memories. A garden of lemon trees, with a single palm tree, watered by a trickling streamlet, is the brightest spot about it. As for an upper chamber, the only elevation of the kind we saw was the huge dunghill, the accumulated rubbish of centuries, on which the youthful population of Sôlam sat or squatted, calling for bakshîsh with the monotone of a company of frogs.

Our dragoman piloted us through a breach in the giant-cactus hedge into a fig-orchard just outside of the village, where we took our noontide rest and refreshment. Rested, we were nothing loath to mount and leave Shunem. Yet the view from the village across the valley to Jezreel, and over the broader plain to Carmel, is very fine.

Passing around the western end of Little Hermon,

* 2 Kings iv. 8-37.

and turning eastward, it was not far to ride—but two or three miles—before we reached another village on the northern face of the mountain. Its houses stand on the ruins of an older and better place. Back of it is a rock-hewn cemetery. This is Nain, now Nein. Like Shunem, it is a poor, broken-down village, richer in its past associations than in its present condition.

The one memory which fills our thoughts at Nain will instantly recur to the reader as it does to the traveler. Here Jesus gave life to the “only son of his mother, and she a widow.” The day before this act of mercy our Lord had been in Capernaum, on the north-west shore of the Sea of Galilee. Traveling on foot, as he no doubt did, it must have been toward evening when he reached this valley on the north of Little Hermon. He was not alone, but accompanied by his disciples, and also by “much people.” Nain was above him on the hillside. He had ascended the slope and was near the gate of the town, but yet without it, when he was met by that sad procession which has made Nain an immortal name. Jesus took in the whole sorrowful story at a glance—the mourners, the bier, the wailing mother; there was no need of words. Touched with compassion, he arrested the movements of the bearers of the bier by a voiceless command, and saying to the mother, “Weep not,” with a divine simplicity of might called back the dead to life with the words, “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.” “And he that was dead sat up and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother.”*

The homes of Nain, and they who dwelt in them,

* Luke vii. 11–18.

have ceased from the earth; the rock-tombs alone remain of ancient human works. But Nain's hill is where it stood when Christ there uttered in act the sympathy ever welling up from his heart of love, and the grand outlook is that upon which his eyes then

MOUNT TABOR, AS SEEN FROM NAIN.

rested, with Tabor in full view across the valley to the north-east—from hence looking like a rounded hemisphere—and the familiar hills of his own Nazareth to the north-west.

But again we descend, that we may cross the third and northernmost of the valleys into which Esdraelon divides on the east, to reach Mount Tabor, now Jebel et-Tôr, on whose top we are to spend the night.

Away to the west we see our camp-train and the 'taktarawân moving slowly over the plain, taking the

direct route to Tabor, whilst we have made the *détour* to Nain. We are to meet at Deburîyeh, a village near the base of the mountain, where the ascent proper begins. Here we tarried a while to collect our forces and to look back upon the places of interest to the south, and then started up the mountain. Our valiant Ginger-pop, ever ready to distinguish himself, here caught sight of some of his donkey kindred. Highly excited, with tail waving aloft and head thrown back, he brayed with a force that must have captivated or alarmed every donkey in Deburîyeh. He then rushed for his new-found friends, totally forgetful of all the precious stores with which he was laden. We trembled for the result as he ran blindly against stones and trees, but he was soon captured and reduced to ignoble obedience, and sent up the ascent a sadder if not a wiser ass.

Tabor rises fifteen hundred feet above the plain on which it stands boldly out, dissevered from the range of Galilean hills except at one point (on the west), where a saddle links it to them. It is so finely rounded and so gracefully shaped that, viewed from any point, it instantly attracts the eye and ever after abides in the memory. It is distinguished too from the bare mountains of Judæa by being finely wooded on the north and west; yet it is not wooded in the American sense, with forests, but broadly dotted with low oak trees, and in places well clothed with them as well as with bushy shrubbery. Flowers too bloom on every hand in captivating beauty and profusion. Not only did we see with delight those with which we had already become familiar, but new and beautiful spe-

cies met our eyes at every turn. On its summit are wooded glades, suggestive of spring-time merrymakings, which must have been full of attraction to the young men and maidens of Israel when the people, resting under the smile of their God, dwelt at peace on mountain and plain.

The summit is reached by a winding, zigzag path, rugged with the native rock and with the upturned stones of a former paved road. This road led to a strong castle which crowned the mount, among whose ruins you now may clamber and dream of days long gone by. But at the end of these ruins you find, what is more important as night comes on, two monasteries, where you can have a safe camping-ground and the all-important *water* for man and beast. One of these is a Latin convent, the other is Greek. Our dragoman led us to the Greek Convent, where we were kindly received and permitted to pitch our tents in the court within the walls.

If it were proper, I should be glad here to draw a veil over the misdeeds of Abdallah, but his utter want of respect for holy places and holy men demands open rebuke. At the Well of Jacob, whilst our thoughts were engaged with the memories of the great past, Abdallah seized the occasion to make a savage onset on the hated Selim. Selim, wheeling rapidly and skillfully, discharged his heels at Abdallah, one of them ringing against the stirrup in which his rider's foot rested, with an unpleasant suggestion of broken limbs. And now, just as we were passing under the arched gateway of the convent, and whilst his rider was courteously saluting a venerable Greek monk who stood

bowing in the gate, Abdallah made a vicious dash upon the object of his animosity, who was just before him. Selim could only leap forward and dart through the gate, with Abdallah savagely biting his haunches. No small disturbance was created, and the scattering of the holy men of the convent was precipitate. Then again at midnight, within the very precincts of the convent, Abdallah, breaking loose, entered on an attack

MOUNT TABOR FROM THE SOUTH.

upon his comrades. Dogs barked, donkeys brayed, muleteers yelled and cursed; all Tabor was in an uproar. Thereafter Abdallah had few friends in the company.

Moral.—It is well before securing a horse for the tour of Palestine to find out whether he has any little

peculiarities of temper. "How is this to be done?" you ask. I am sorry to reply, "I don't know." With horses, as with a higher race, appearances are deceitful.

Up before sunrise, we had from the stone roof of the Tabor convent church one of those views which it is futile to attempt to convey by words to others. In the north shone the lordly Hermon, facing broadly southward, crowned with fields of snow that glistened royally in the young sunlight. In the east rose the mountains of Gilead. Little Hermon and Gilboa faced us on the south, whilst at our feet spread, like a velvet carpet of green and brown, the whole plain of Esdraelon away to the foot of Carmel. Yet the sight that most moved us was the glimpse of the upper end of the Sea of Galilee nestling among its surrounding mountains, and speaking to us of Him who once walked upon its waves.

Now down from the church-roof to breakfast and to prayers.

Our evening and morning prayers were a constant refreshment to us. That the travel is in *Palestine* does not forbid weariness or prevent the annoyances of life on horseback and in camp. It is downright hard work, with exposure to every variety of weather and to severe fatigue. Persons entering upon the journey should secure congenial associates, and morning and evening should seek the presence and protection of God. We were favored in having a company singularly united in sympathy and aims. Each day before we left our breakfast-tent the Bible was read, we sang

a hymn and united in prayer. In the evening, immediately after our dinner, we had again our family worship. With good singers, intelligent readers and sincere petitioners our services contributed a profitable and important element to our daily life. Often, when sorely weary, have we been rested and enlivened by a succession of stirring hymns well sung. The Bible is every tourist's handbook in Palestine, but the Hymnal should not be left at home.

Tabor was long held to be the mountain on which our Lord was transfigured, and the association of this event with its own attractions has crowned it with both natural and supernatural glory. But this belief has given way before a closer study of the Gospel narrative, which makes it altogether probable that the transfiguration took place in the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi and on some part of Mount Hermon. I cannot see that the fact of there being a castle on the summit of Tabor would forbid the occurrence there of this illustrious event (as is generally urged), for its wooded sides would have afforded retired nooks in abundance for the scene. It is rather the demands of the Gospel history that make it improbable that Tabor was the scene of the transfiguration.

In leaving Tabor it is well to go down the mountain on foot. The descent is precipitous, and rough for riding, and on foot you can better enjoy the glorious views that greet you at many a turn.

MOUNT TABOR, FROM THE WEST.

RECEIVED

CHAPTER XVIII.

NAZARETH.

A SOUL-THRILLING name is on our lips; in two hours we are to be in Nazareth! Often, on the plain, had my eyes been lifted to the hills on the north, embosomed in which lay hid the place where our Lord passed nine-tenths of his life on earth. Now we have left Tabor and Esdraelon behind us, and are ascending those Galilean mountains. At length we reach a point in the rim of enclosing hills from which we look down into a pretty vale, a mile in length by a quarter of a mile in breadth, lying eight hundred feet above the sea-level. Near us the vale is studded with olive trees, a little farther with fruit-orchards, whilst on the rising ground beyond a town, with its lower houses in the valley, climbs the hillside, which rises behind the town to a height of four hundred feet. Its houses are fresh and white, and lie in a crescent full before us as we approach it from the east. A minaret tells of the Moslem, but Christian churches are there too. The place seems made for quiet homes, from which the busy world is shut out by the surrounding hills—for hearts that would rather look up to heaven than out upon the surging stream of this world's pursuits and conflicts. It is Nazareth.

Jesus, the Christ, dwelt in this highland valley, un-

known of men, for thirty of the thirty-three years which he spent on earth. Often during these years from infancy to manhood did he look off to these hills that sweep as an undulating rim about the vale. Often did he ascend to the mountain-top to meditate and pray. In a modest house in the town which

NAZARETH, FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

stood where this En-Nâsirah now stands he had his home. In it he dwelt as a child, "subject to his parents," as a youth and as a man. Here he wrought patiently, unassumingly, unrecognized by men, though known of God. Who can analyze this wonder? Who can penetrate this mystery? Who can, with keen discrimination, tell us where the man ceased and the God began—where was the unseen line of union between the human and the divine? If we fail when searching

for the point of contact and of divergence of soul and body in ourselves, little wonder is it that we cannot by our coarse analysis dissect away the God from the man in the wonder of wonders, the God-man, Jesus of Nazareth.

Entering Nazareth from the east, we pitched our tents at the north-eastern end of the town, or rather just out of the town, on a level spot not far from the Greek Church of the Annunciation and the Fountain of the Virgin. Travelers are entertained at the Franciscan Convent, but by this time we were more at home in our tents than under roofs. In Nazareth especially would we be free from the confinement of modern walls to commune with the scenes on which the eyes of the Master unquestionably were wont to rest.

The present town of Nazareth (En-Nâsirah) is one of recent growth. The Nazareth of eighteen hundred years ago not only, but other Nazareths that succeeded it, have been destroyed in the wars of successive ages. Few of the houses now standing are more than a hundred years old. The site is the old site, but the buildings are for the most part modern. In fact, the Nazareth of to-day is largely the growth of the past fifty years. Many of its houses are fresh and bright, built solidly of a yellowish limestone, with flat roofs, not domed as are those of the Judæan towns. Gardens are mingled with the houses, and the place has a brighter, fresher look than any which we have seen in Palestine.

It is mainly a Christian town. Even Protestantism has a hold here. Well up the hill overhanging the

place, the Jebel es-Sikh, stands a handsome orphanage for girls (of whom it now cares for forty-five) under an English society, and a church of the Church of England is in the town. There is a Protestant hospital too, and a colporteur visited our tents selling beautifully-printed Arabic New Testaments at a franc (twenty cents) apiece.* Christianity has left its impress on the people here, as in Bethlehem. The men are more frank and independent, the women are more free. Even the veil is cast aside.

Yet when you enter the bazaar-streets of Nazareth you find them true Syrian streets—narrow, ill-paved, with a gutter in the middle; the shops, too, are mere cells, in which the shopkeepers squat amid their little stocks of wares, and the dogs lounge about or lie stretched upon the pavement in true Eastern fashion.

The population of the town is variously estimated. It is probably about six thousand, mainly Christians of the various sects.

With one exception—the Fountain of the Virgin—the “holy places” of Nazareth pointed out by the monks have no claim upon our belief. In connection with the Latin Convent is a church of the Annunciation, from which you descend to a grotto cut into the limestone rock. Here you are shown the spot on which the Virgin Mary stood when the angel announced to her the fact that she had been chosen of God to the high honor of being the mother of the Saviour. Beyond this a rock-hewn staircase leads to a rude cave, which you are told was the Virgin’s kitchen. Why she should burrow thus under the earth

* They were from the American Press at Beirut.

NAZARETH, FROM THE EAST.

for a kitchen they do not tell you. Then there is the workshop of Jesus, and a rock which served him for a table; and two miles away from the town is the rock from which his enraged townsmen sought to cast him.

These spots have a certain interest growing out of the traditions associated with them, and therefore travelers are apt to visit them. They would gain rather than lose by avoiding the whole lot of impostures, and reserving time and thought for those objects with which the life of Jesus was certainly linked. The valley and its hills, not made by man and which man cannot unmake, were those amid which the Son of God passed the greater portion of his life on earth.

When walking through a closely-built street we came upon a house at which we were glad to pause.

CARPENTER'S SHOP AT NAZARETH.

We entered it. It was one of the simple, square stone houses of the place, a carpenter's shop. The tools of the carpenter's trade hung against the wall or lay upon

the bench, whilst pieces of work were strewn about the small, stone-floored room. Saw in hand, working at the bench, was a clear-skinned, large-eyed Syrian boy of fourteen years. We half held our breath as the thought flashed itself across our minds that just thus, in a carpenter's shop of this secluded, unknown Nazareth, eighteen centuries ago, wrought a sinless boy, at whose word a few years later the blind would see, the dumb would speak, the dead would be recalled to life and sins would be forgiven—that from the humble shop of the carpenter of Nazareth would go forth One whose teachings would revolutionize the thought of the world, and whose death and resurrection would avail to bear ransomed sinners to everlasting glory. O favored Nazareth! how greatly honored of God! Yet thou didst not know the day of thy visitation. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. Jesus could do no mighty works in thee because of thine unbelief! But before we upbraid thee let us ask whether this word is true of thee alone, or of us also.

The Fountain of the Virgin is the one unquestioned site of Nazareth. Springs are slow to change their places; nor is there the least reason to suppose that this fountain, about which the women of Nazareth gather to-day, is not the fountain to which the women of eighteen hundred years ago came with their pitchers in like manner. No doubt it is the fountain from which Mary the mother of Jesus daily bore water for use in her modest home. As little is it to be doubted that her boy came with her, walking by her side, laving his feet in the pool, and then follow-

ing her as she bore the water up the slope to their dwelling.

Mary's Fountain is just out of the town, at its north-eastern end. But the spring which feeds it is among the rocks a hundred and twenty paces away. Over the rock-hewn aqueduct which conveys the water to the fountain, and almost at its source, stands a Greek church—the Church of Gabriel. It is called also the Church of the Annunciation, since the Greeks hold to the tradition (which has no inherent improbability) that the angel Gabriel here met the virgin whom God had chosen to honor, and uttered to her the “Hail Mary! Blessed art thou among women!” The water passes below the pavement of the church, but there is a small opening through which vessels may be let down and the water drawn up. From the church it passes to a covered reservoir, from which it runs through several metal spouts in the upright stone face of an arched recess into a stone trough. ^SCanon Tristram (in his *Land of Israel*) says: “It has six or seven constantly-running taps;” but as our accurate Dr. Edward Robinson writes that it dries up in summer, compelling the people to go to more distant fountains, I may believe my own eyes that at the time of our visit (March 28, 1879) there were but two running spouts—one as broad as four fingers, and the other no thicker than your thumb. It will be readily understood that, with the women representing six thousand souls coming hither to draw, water was in demand at this fountain. There was crowding and pushing among the girls and women who stood barefooted in the watery pool made by the overflow of the trough.

Weak ones had to wait while the strong pressed in with their earthenware pitchers and jars, all eager for the precious water. It was a lively scene, full of noisy chatter, laughter mingling with scolding and complaining, and merry faces with frowning ones.

The bearing of water is one of the heavy burdens laid upon the women of the East, who share this toilsome work with the poor donkeys. But it is not an unmixed trial, for the well is the female gossip-exchange of the Syrian village. The enjoyment of so fine an opportunity for hearing and telling all the news of the day is a mitigation of this otherwise burdensome work.

The women of Nazareth are famed for their beauty. Whilst I cannot pay a very high tribute to the comeliness of those whom we saw at the Fountain of the Virgin, as judged by our American standard of beauty, yet it is certain that they are superior in looks and bearing, as well as in dress, to their sisters of the Moslem towns south of them. Their faces are more bright, pleasing and intelligent, and their movements more free. They do not hide behind the veil, and think it indecent to see and be seen or to let their voices be heard by men. Their dress is striking to one coming from Southern Palestine. The head-dress of braided coins, the long white veil thrown back from the head, the full and gayly-colored trousers, with the coat-like robe, sometimes girt up about the waist when walking, are in marked contrast with the baggy robes and hideous veils in which the women of Jerusalem envelop themselves when abroad. The whole air of the Christian women of Nazareth is that of freedom,

intelligence and self-respect. It is an interesting fact that travelers make this remark at Bethlehem and Nazareth, the places where Christ was born and lived; it would seem that these spots are favored with a manifestation of this blessing brought by him to earth.

One of the glorious things of Nazareth is the view from the summit of the high hill at its back, the Jebel

GIRL OF NAZARETH.

es-Sikh. This is one of the views which may be coveted. The eye sweeps slowly around the horizon, longing to rest at every point, yet eager to turn to the next. Mountains and plains replete with sacred

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history are about you—Hermon, Tabor, Gilboa, Gilead, Esdraelon, Jezreel, Safed and Sepphoris. And off to the west glitters in the sunlight the sea, the “Great Sea,” in a wide-extended surface, whilst purple Carmel runs out to bathe its feet in the blue waters. From the base of Carmel a long sandspit seems to form the Bay of Acre, on whose smooth water the sails of vessels float like winged waterfowl.

We sat on our horses until the coming darkness warned us to descend to our camp, thinking that Jesus must often have looked out with his pure eyes upon this scene, and from this spot up from earth to heaven. Oh, how blessed were it if we might ever look at the world through the eyes of the sinless Christ!

The sun set. The silvery moon floated amid drifting clouds. The muezzin cry, calling the followers of Mohammed to prayer, sounded out from the minaret of the mosque. As the sun departed to give place to the crescent moon, so in this land has the Sun of Righteousness been rejected to make way for the Crescent of Islam.

In the morning, awaking before sunrise, I left my tent and went forth to stand beneath the canopy of heaven. It was that stillest hour of the twenty-four when the night is far spent and the day is at hand. A soft east wind was fanning hill and plain, seeming to come fresh from the morning star which sparkled low in the sky. The waving line of hilltops formed an encircling horizon about the slumbering Nazareth. How still it was, this Nazareth sleeping in its retired basin amid the mountains, away from sight and sound



of all the world! How irresistible was the consciousness that the eyes of the Saviour had often followed, at such an hour, that rising and falling line of hilltop and slope! that he had often looked up to these heavens from this place, and that here he had held communion with the Father!

But the twittering birds awoke and hastened to announce the opening day; the hoarse cawing of the crows followed; the cocks aroused themselves to salute the coming king. The stars began to fade and the sky to glow, and soon the sun arose over the eastern hills, flooding Nazareth and the world with light.

The Sun of Righteousness has long been unseen in this land. The Moslem Crescent has been held on high. But as the sun that set below the western sea last night arose in glory this morning, so shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, and the Crescent shall pale and wane before it. The light that went forth from this land shall again shine on it, and not on it alone, but on all the world.

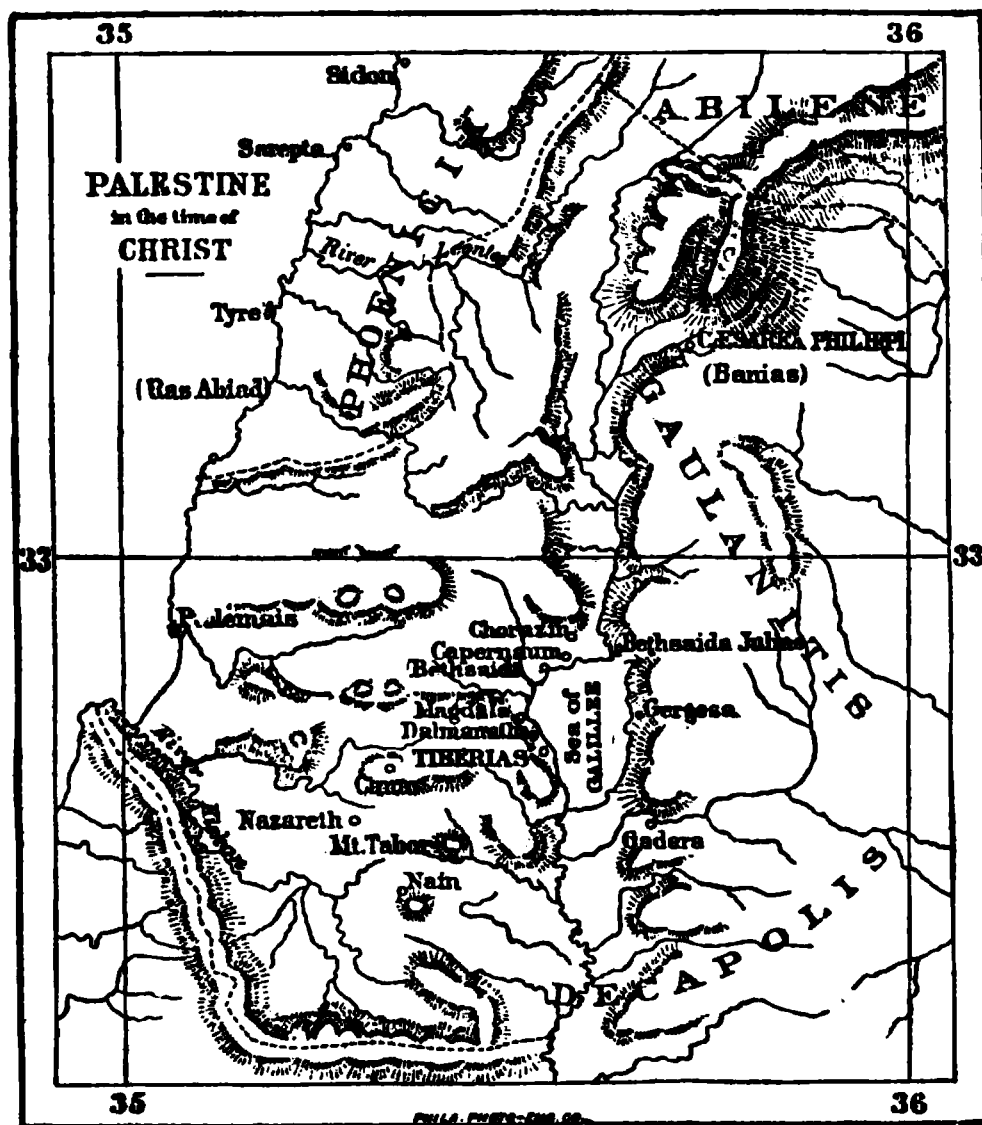
CHAPTER XIX.

CANA—HATTÎN—TIBERIAS.

WHEN rejected by the men of Nazareth, Jesus turned to the shores of the Sea of Galilee to exercise his ministry and perform his wondrous works amid the clustering towns and thronging people of its western coast. On gaining the summit of the mountain overhanging Nazareth did he not look back with moistened eyes upon the city nestling in its hill-girt basin, just as we looked down upon it ere we saw it no more? And then he turned eastward as we did, for we were to camp that night near Tiberias and beside the lake.

The way descends, for Nazareth stands high and Tiberias is in the Jordan ravine, far down below the level of the sea. We went thither cheerily, rejoicing that all of our company were in health, and that our friend Cecil was with us on his horse. At Nazareth we had the pleasure of dismissing the taktarawân and of seeing its occupant mounted. Indeed, all of our sick men had gained greatly, notwithstanding the roughness of our travel, and now were in fair trim for work. But if we lost the taktarawân and its horses, we gained a dog. At Debûriyeh, under Tabor, our friend Jack, through some mischance, lost us. No

sooner had he disappeared than a foxy, crop-eared fellow took his place in our camp. At Nazareth, Jack turned up again. Croppy asserted his right to the place which had been left vacant, in virtue of possession. Jack demanded it as his by previous ownership.



GALILEE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST.

A question so complicated could only be settled by the *ultima ratio regum*—war. After a suitable amount of fighting and a reasonable degree of damage to each party (as is also customary with combatants of a higher order), a flag of truce was displayed, and the two dogs entered into an alliance, offensive and defensive, to share the plunder of the kitchen of the howadjis and to drive off all other claimants. It must be admitted that the two high contracting parties did not always

agree as to the division of the bones, and that the new-comer, being the better dog, secured more than his fair share, though not without protest from Jack. Yet, on the whole, the alliance proved amicable, and the dogs of Galilee secured small pickings from our camp.

In less than two hours after leaving Nazareth we reach a spot not unknown to sacred story—Kefr-Kenna, or the "village of Kenna," which is identified by the majority of scholars with the Cana of Galilee, where the Saviour's first miracle was wrought.* There is a ruined village, known as Kana el-Jelil, which also claims this honor, but we prefer Kefr-Kenna as the spot where the Master was guest at a wedding, and relieved the embarrassment of his host by changing water into wine. It is a poor town of six hundred

inhabitants, but the miracle is kept in memory by the Greek Christians of the place, who showed us the very room in which the wedding-feast was held. It is now turned into a chapel of course. And how dared we question the fact when two stone basins

KEFR-KENNA.

were shown us as part of the "six waterpots of stone" which were filled to the brim with water? In Cologne

* John ii. 1-11.

we saw also one of these six waterpots; there it is an alabaster vase. But it will not do to question the pots or the room too closely, lest we begin to doubt the excellent men who assert the identity of both.

The women of Kefr-Kenna are regular Gibeonites, "hewers of wood and drawers of water." The loads of both wood and water which they carry make them veritable beasts of burden. As we entered the town some of them were returning from wood-cutting, with small mountains of the brush which serves for fuel piled on their heads. One small woman I noticed carrying a child of two or three years on her hip and a huge jar of water on her head. The gospel is needed in Cana to humanize man and to rescue woman from oppression. Would that Cana were the only Syrian village of which this might be said!

John tells us that after the marriage-feast Jesus, his mother, his brethren and his disciples "went down to Capernaum." Down it is, we find. To the north and on the left stretches the long, fertile plain of Buttauf, rich, but poorly tilled. Here and there are villages on the hills, but the entire absence of single houses gives an air of desolation to the country. The clusters of black tents of Bedouins on the hillsides are a manifestation of life, but of a kind not very favorable to the security of property in the hands of the peasantry. The fewer the Bedouins, the better for those who care to reap what they have sown and tilled. Yet the Turkish tax-gatherer is almost as much dreaded, and as rightly dreaded, as the plundering Arab. Wine-presses and water-cisterns, cut in the rocks by the roadside, tell of the time when this land was richer

than it now is. At present not a vineyard is to be seen in this region.

But here is a sight to which we are not accustomed—a long straggling train of men on foot and men on horses and men on donkeys. A few women there are also, and a number of lads. One woman rides with a little child in her arms; it is crying, and no wonder. There is a fat matron too, on a white horse well padded with quilts. But the women are few. The men and boys sing as they walk. These are Christian pilgrims on their way from Aleppo to Jerusalem to attend the Easter services at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. A long, weary journey it is, and they must endure much to receive but a poor return. We found one poor fellow lying under a bush by the roadside, too sick to walk. But they seemed to be a cheery set; the pilgrimage is a grand variety to the quiet of Eastern life, and will make them famous heroes in their villages on their return.

This company, going up to the Christian Passover, gave us a lively picture of the annual pilgrimage of the Jews to celebrate their Passover at Jerusalem—some riding, more walking, men largely, with fewer women and boys, singing the psalms of degrees as they went up to the Holy City. When a lad Jesus thus went to the Passover with his mother and Joseph, and in his ministry his disciples thus journeyed with him to Jerusalem. No doubt there were regular stations for the pilgrims, with camping-grounds near fountains and wells, as at present; perhaps caravanserais for shelter, as the convents now shelter the Christians on their way to Jerusalem.

At noon we were glad to rest awhile and to escape from the hot sun in an olive-grove near Lûbieh, for the sun was already powerful on March 29. But the lunch seemed dry and water from the leather bottle not abundant or fresh. If it had not been a hopeless fancy, we would have looked around for the farmhouse, with its cool well, and the comfortable, motherly woman from whom we could have procured a pitcher of milk to help out our meal. But alas for the dreary absence of homes and of the comforts of life in this land!

It was a sad reflection that the ambition of Napoleon Bonaparte dragged the husbands and sons of French homes to this distant spot to enrich these rocky plains with their blood in deadly conflict with Turks and Arabs dragged from their humble homes by their Ottoman rulers.*

But we are anxious to reach the Sea of Galilee. The country stretches drearily before us—drearily, not because it is a desert, but because it is deserted; yet we are moving forward cheerily, expecting soon to look down upon the lake consecrated for ever by the footsteps of the Saviour. In two hours we ride down a romantic path guarded by rocky cliffs. Volcanic force in pre-historic times poured over the limestone ridges streams of lava, which cooled into ba-

* This was in April, 1799, and was a part of Napoleon's unsuccessful effort to conquer Egypt and the East. After the victory at the Pyramids he led his army to El-Arish, to Gaza and to Jaffa with success. In his attempt to take Acre he was foiled by the bravery of its Arab defenders, backed by British helpers, and compelled to give up his hopes of Eastern conquest. The French were commanded by Junot in the battle near Hattín.

saltic rock. It is through these basaltic fields and the limestone rock below them that you descend to the plain of Hattin. As you enter upon this fertile plain—fertile, though strewn with fragments of black basalt—you look up to a hill on your right hand, with a top about a fourth of a mile in length and an elevation like a budding horn at each end. This is the

KURN HATTIN, THE MOUNT OF BEATITUDES.

famed Kurn Hattin, the "Horns of Hattin," where the Christian rule of the crusaders in Palestine was crushed and its last army cut to pieces by the brilliant Moslem sultan Saladin. This was in the year 1187, amid the heat of a Syrian July. But another and a nobler memory gathers about the Horns of Hattin, since tradition has made this eminence the spot where our Lord gave to the people his Sermon on the Mount. It is true that there is no historic authority for the choice of this mountain, yet there is no reason against the choice; and the mount so well suits the scene that we are willing to accept the tradi-

tion and to look upon Kurn Hattîn as the Mount of Beatitudes.

The plain at its foot, as well as the mountain, takes its name from the town of Hattîn, which stands on the plain. Both village and people have an air of their own. The women's dresses are brilliant with red, blue and yellow. The children are bright and free. The very marked Semitic features of the men, too, are noticeable, recalling those profiles of Asiatic prisoners which become so familiar to the traveler in Egypt, as seen sculptured and painted on the ancient temples where the Pharaohs recorded their victories. The little rooms of wattle on the housetops, for summer sleeping, are suggestive of the hotter climate to which we are descending.

We ride for some distance along the plain, which is cultivated in grain. On our left opens the gorge of Wâdy Hamâm, descending to the Plain of Gennesaret; but we are bound for the town of Tiberias, farther south. And now it is not long till the Sea of Galilee bursts upon our view, deep sunken in its oval basin. It is a thousand feet below us yet, reflecting heaven's blue from its unruffled surface, tempting us to draw nearer. This we are not loath to do. But the descent is rugged, forbidding a too eager haste. Tiberias lies at our foot on the brink of the lake—a walled city, but with towers shattered and gray walls breached by earthquake-shock. We do not enter the town, but, passing to the south, pitch our tents on the shore amid heaps of stone that once were laid in city houses. The city has gone, leaving only these stone-heaps to tell of its existence. Leaping from my horse,

I went to the beach, and, carrying the water to my lips, saluted with joy the waves once trodden by the feet of the Son of God.

"Were you disappointed in the lake?" you ask. I answer, "No." The lake is more beautiful in itself and nobler in its setting than I had supposed. It is possible that its sacred associations influenced my judgment, but its beauty is beyond question. In shape an irregular oval, about fourteen miles long by seven broad, begirt with steep mountains on the east, broken cliffs on the south-west and gently-sloping hills on the north-west, with headlands and little bays,

TIBERIAS, FROM THE SOUTH.

and varying in color with the changing skies, it is a fair thing to look upon; to the Christian it is more than fair.

One of the delights of this spot is that it is not

marred by the absurdities which the Greek and Latin churches have affixed to so many sites in Palestine. Many a sacred place is degraded by superstitious follies and lies, against which reason and religion unite to revolt. Here are no absurd tales of ignorant monks, no lying shrines, no stupid frivolities or pious frauds to repel delight in a true home of Christ. Rome can never roof in this lake with its border of mountains. The questionings which arise elsewhere here have no place. The sea and its borders speak unquestioned to the heart of the Christian, telling at every turn of the life of Christ on earth.

It was an unmixed delight to look upon it, to gather its shells, to bathe in its clear water, to walk on its stony beach, to sleep beside it, soothed to rest by the murmur of its wavelets.

The Sabbath was a day of loveliness. I had waked in the night and gone forth to gaze upon the lake, silvered by the moon and sleeping unvexed by nature or by man. Moon and stars and unruffled wave, all were those on which the Master had so often looked. The soft warm air of the sunken valley was that which fanned his cheek as he turned his eyes to heaven and held converse with the Father. Surely this was holy ground.

It was not easy to sleep amid such scenes and memories. I rose again betimes. The day began to dawn, but the lake was still slumbering in quiet beauty. Not a breath stirred its bosom. All was calm, peaceful, tranquil. Not a sound was there to echo from the cliffs amid which the waters were at rest. But now the sun lifted its face over the mountains of Gilead

to look with warm glow upon the placid lake. Blushing, it woke.

The day had come. The camp was astir. Muleteer and mule, horseman and horse, bird and beast, and townsmen from Tiberias, aroused to the life of the new day. As the sun glanced over the eastern cliffs upon the water, a boat was rowed northward near the shore on which we stood. It contained seven men—just the number of those disciples who toiled all night and caught nothing.* They too had been fishing all night, but they had taken fish abundantly, as did the disciples *after* the Master spoke to them. The lake swarms with fish. It was famed for its fish in the days of Christ, when surrounded by a dense population; now that there are few to cast the net in its waters it is not strange that they multiply. There were four boats, and only four, on the whole lake at the time of our visit—all small fishing-boats and owned in Tiberias. For the most part, the surface of the lake is void of life. How changed from the days of Christ, when it was a scene of constant activity, and boats went to and fro on errands of business or pleasure! Then a dense population clustered here, busy with husbandry, with trade and with the mechanic arts. Towns were found at every mile or two along its northern and western shores—Bethsaida, Capernaum, Magdala and others. Tiberias, the city just built by Herod Antipas, shone in the fresh splendor of marble palace, of theatre, castle and pier. Towns were not wanting on the eastern shore, though less numerous than on the western, since little space

* John xxi.

THE SEA OF GALILEE AND ITS CITIES RESTORED—LOOKING SOUTHWARD FROM ABOVE ET-TÂBGAH.

is there left for occupation between the mountains and the lake.

The hum of industry and the bustle of commerce filled these towns, whilst the country afforded room for villas for the wealthy few and garden-plots for the laboring many. Aqueducts carried the water of abundant fountains to distant points for the irrigation of field and garden. Fig and olive, vine and palm, and brilliant-hued pomegranate, adorned hillside and plain. Roman soldiers had their barracks and Roman officers their quarters here, whilst the boats upon the lake gave it the same life that stirred upon the shore.*

Now, how changed the scene! You ride for hours beside the Lake of Galilee and do not see one house; you may not meet a human being, except, mayhap, a few meagre Arabs in dirty robes, moving on some poor errand, with a half-starved donkey or two as their helpers in the sordid struggle for life. The whole circuit of the lake is uninhabited except at Tiberias (now Tubariyeh), within whose crumbling walls three thousand people dwell in poverty, and at Mejdal (the ancient Magdala), where is a cluster of

* The engraving gives an attempted restoration of the lake and its shores in the days of Christ, viewed from the north. Just on the left of the foreground (could it be seen) would be the entrance of the Jordan. The pier may be supposed to jut out from Capernaum. On the right stretches the Plain of Gennesaret, with Magdala, the home of Mary Magdalene, at its southern limit, beyond which the mountains come boldly down to the water. In a recess in them, farther south, glitter the buildings of Tiberias. Beyond Tiberias lie the hot-springs, and there the shore curves eastward to the foot of the lake, where the Jordan escapes from the placid basin to go dashing down through its ever-deepening ravine to the Dead Sea. On the east are seen the landings for Gergesa and Gamala.

wretched hovels. Thorns and thistles contend with the lily and oleander for the occupancy of the soil that formerly fed thousands. So thoroughly has the woe pronounced by our Lord upon the cities wherein his mighty works were done been fulfilled that Chorazin, Capernaum and Bethsaida have utterly passed away. Indeed, the learned dispute as to where they stood, and whether there were two Bethsaidas or one.

The Sabbath rest was most welcome to the travelers after the work of the week, and not less welcome to the muleteers and the patient creatures that had toiled up and down the rough Galilean hills with our tents and camping-equipage. Our horses, too, were refreshed by the cessation of labor and by baths in the lake which rippled on the shore before our camp. Our company of seven had a pleasant service. With Robinson's *Harmony of the Gospels* as our guide, we looked up in our Bibles and read aloud the record of the events which here took place in connection with the life and teachings of Christ, mingling the reading with prayer and hymns of praise. It is impressive to see how large a part of the Gospels belongs to this spot. Just look up the points in a "Synopsis of the Harmony," and you will see at a glance why it is that those words, "the Sea of Galilee," are so precious to the believer, so tender in their associations. It is the gem of Palestine, a sapphire fairly set in its framework of hills, but more fairly set in the golden words and works of the Son of God.

During this delightful day we had an opportunity of seeing the lake in many moods. For hours it basked in the sunshine, and the steep cliffs of its east-

ern border, the land of the Gergesenes, stood out distinctly in the light. Then came a sudden gust of wind with hurrying clouds, and the blue lake changed to green, then to a deep olive. The clouds grew more dense and the water was black. A long flash of lightning gleamed over the eastern mountains, a thunder-peal reverberated from eastern to western cliff, and the

THE LAKE FROM BELOW TIBERIAS, WITH HERMON IN THE
DISTANCE.

dashing rain shut out from view Gergesa and all its shore. The rain ceased, and again our lake lay before us in calm completeness.

When we were on the deep, sunken plain far south,

between Jordan and Jericho, just as the sun set, a white peak, softly shining like a star in the north, caught our eyes. It was the crown of kingly Hermon. That it should be visible so far away was a startling surprise. But its height above the sea is nearly ten thousand feet, and we were then twelve hundred feet *below* the sea-level. Again, when we stood on the summit of Tabor, Hermon appeared to us, now filling a broad space in the north-eastern horizon. Here at the Sea of Galilee the great mountain was nearer still, rising boldly above the lower hills, snow-crowned and a "goodly mountain."

CHAPTER XX.

TIBERIAS—MAGDALA—GENNESARET—CAPER- NAUM—BETHSAIDA.

MONDAY morning broke with lowering clouds, but lowering clouds do not stop the pilgrim in Palestine. Precious hours cannot be wasted in waiting for sunshine. We breakfasted at half-past six, that we might have a long day for our survey of the northern portion of the lake and its coasts. As we mounted our horses the rain began to fall. The rubber-suits, always carried in our saddle-bags, were quickly put on, and we rode in single file along the path beside the lake. Passing the tombs of the Jewish rabbis, we entered Tiberias by a breach in its wall, walked through its dilapidated streets, out by its earthquake-riven castle, and then along the bridle-path northward.

Tiberias was built by Herod Antipas (A. D. 20), whilst Christ was dwelling in Nazareth. When the Roman Vespasian was engaged in the conquest of Palestine (A. D. 67) it surrendered to his forces without a struggle, and was rewarded with special favor, the Jews being suffered to live there unmolested. The Jewish Sanhedrim was transferred to Tiberias after the

destruction of Jerusalem, and learned commentators made it their home. It was long the head-quarters of Jewish learning, and is still esteemed by them as a holy city. Half of its inhabitants to-day are Jews. Our Lord seems not to have entered this city during his ministry in Galilee; at least, the Gospels make no mention of his visiting it.

The present town, Tubariyeh, contains little of interest, although its situation on the lake-side, its shattered walls with their flanking towers, and its palm trees, give it not a little beauty when seen from a distance. Seven hundred of its people were destroyed by the earthquake of 1837, and those who now dwell there are poor and ignorant.

It is commonly reported that the King of the Fleas holds his court in Tubariyeh, but it was not convenient for us to stop and pay him our respects. This was to be regretted, as we should have been glad to lay before him a statement of the unjustifiable behavior of his subjects, who seemed to think that foreign howadjis had no rights which Syrian fleas need respect. Owing to the shortness of our time and the rain, we had to deny ourselves the pleasure and profit of an interview with His Majesty.

Passing out of the city, we followed a path in the rocks, which here overhang the water, now twenty, now fifty, feet above the lake. The rain poured in torrents, making the road a stream of water. The surf broke on the fragments of rock which had rolled down from the mountain, lashing them in true sea style. White caps were on the sea as far as the eye could reach, and the eastern shore was hidden from

MODERN THERIAS, AND THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE LAKE.



view by the sheets of rain. A change had come over the placid lake of yesterday.

Here, in a little recess left between mountain and lake, must have stood that Dalmanutha to which our Lord came after the miraculous feeding of the four thousand, and where the unbelieving Pharisees sought from him a "sign from heaven."* There is nothing now to mark the place.

We ride a little farther along our rocky path, with the cliff on our left and the stormy lake on our right, and suddenly a plain opens out before us, two miles and a half along the lake by a mile from hill to shore. Three valleys from the western range open into this

MEJDEL AND THE PLAIN OF GENNESARET, LOOKING NORTH.

plain, across which five little streams find their way into the lake. It is the Plain of Gennesaret. Happily, the rain now holds up, so that we are better able to enjoy this sacred spot, so intimately and tenderly associated with the life of our Lord. The receding hills leave this pretty garden-spot between their feet

* Mark viii 1-13.

and the shore. It is fertile and fair, enriched with fountain and streamlet, stretching gently down to the lake, which laves its soft beach, all white with pretty little shells and their fragments. In its genial climate, though hot withal in summer, fruits and flowers find a fitting home.* Josephus, the Jewish historian of eighteen hundred years ago (whose description of the wars in which the Romans crushed the Jews and destroyed Jerusalem contributes so much to our knowledge of that period), pronounces a warm eulogium on this pretty plain: "Its nature is wonderful, as well as its beauty. Its soil is so fruitful that all sorts of trees can grow upon it. Walnuts, which require the coldest air, flourish there in vast plenty. There are palm trees also, which grow best in hot air. Fig trees also, and olives, grow near them, which yet require an air that is more temperate. One may call this place the ambition of nature, for it forces those plants which are naturally enemies to one another to agree together."†

As you enter upon the plain at its southern end, a hamlet of twenty wretched hovels meets your eye. This is El-Mejdel, once Magdala, from the Hebrew Migdol (a "tower"). Here dwelt that Mary of Magdala, or Mary Magdalene, whose devotion to the Master who delivered her from a life of horror has kept her memory fresh through eighteen hundred years. But beyond this cluster of huts not a habitation is there on all this rich plain. You ride over it, now a

* Conder makes the depth of the lake below the Mediterranean six hundred and eighty-two feet six inches.

† Josephus, *Wars*, iii. 10.

hundred yards back from the lake, by paths overhung with the oleander, whose fresh blossoms we plucked without quitting our saddles, now upon the soft shelly beach, but ever through a waste solitude. One Arab, ploughing a little patch of ground, was the only exception to the completeness of the desertion of this plain, which once teemed with people.

Yet it seems well that it should be deserted of man.

PLAIN OF GENNESARET, VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

This desertion leaves you alone with the memory of Him whose feet so often pressed this beach—whose eyes so often looked across the plain to the western mountains which enclose it, and out upon the lake. Then, plain and lake were rich with concentrated life; now, their only wealth is the memory of the Christ

who has made the name of Gennesaret sweetest music to the ear of millions.

And now we have reached Khân Minyeh at the upper end of the little plain. Here is a fountain lying under a rocky cliff, the Ain et-Tin, "Fountain of the Fig," forming a clear, broad pool just above the level of the lake, on whose marshy borders the papyrus grows thickly.

We had made our arrangements to have a boat here to meet us and carry us across the lake, after

which we were to return hither to camp. The outlook was not inviting, it must be confessed. The wind was high and the sea rough. The rain, too, now began to fall again. But we do not stick at trifles. The boatmen, four in number, had

BOAT ON GALILEE.

brought their boat around from Tiberias, and awaited our coming. Like the islanders of Melita, among whom Paul was cast at his shipwreck, they had "kindled a fire, because of the present rain and because of the cold." They were clustered about the fire, somewhat in the dress of Peter before he girt his fisherman's coat about him, busily drying their clothes. They obeyed our hail, however, put on their half-

dried garments and waited on us. Two of them entered the boat, which lay with its stern to the shore; two others took us in their arms, one by one, and dropped us over the stern on the boat. We were twelve in all—four boatmen, seven pilgrims and the dragoman. The boats in which our Lord and his disciples sailed were probably somewhat larger, but not greatly different from ours, which was about twenty feet long. Our men rowed off from the shore, and then set the sail on the one mast of the boat. The wind, which had been from the south-east, hauled to the south and favored our voyage to the eastern shore of the lake. We sailed north-eastward, and for some time made good progress, the rain having ceased. But the waves ran high, often breaking over the side of the boat and tossing their foaming crests among the passengers. We had seen the lake in the loveliness of serenity; now we learned that it could be angry too. As far as the eye could reach to windward, nothing was seen but the white-capped surface of the water, for the mountains in the east and south were hidden by the rain falling over them. It was an ocean-scene; and ocean-consequences began to follow. As we neared the point where the Jordan enters the lake from the north the swell increased in power, and began to tell upon the stomachs of some of the passengers. Two succumbed, and leaned over the side of the boat, apparently intent upon some object not visible to ordinary eyes, and then looked ghastly, as if shocked by what they had discovered. The wind was now blowing from the south-west, and our boatmen said that it would be impossible for them

to get back to Khân Minyeh, where our camp would be. We were in the position of the disciples when bid to pass over the lake after the feeding of the five thousand, when "the ship was in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary;" only that the contrariness was in prospect for us. It was easy to run before the gale, but the farther we went the greater would be our trouble in getting back to our camp on the western side of the lake.

We wanted to go to the east of the Jordan, but it was not to be thought of. So the order was given and our boat's head turned to the land. Having reached the shore, she was anchored from the bow and swung round, so that the boatmen could put us ashore over the stern, as they had brought us aboard.

Now behold seven pilgrims and one dragoman on the desolate, deserted northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, with their camp miles away to the southwest at Khân Minyeh! To add to the dolefulness of their position, down poured the rain once more with a pelting fury that could hardly be exceeded. Like Paul in the ship, the captain of the pilgrim-band exhorted his company to take some meat. The lunch-bag was produced and a moist meal made, our tin plates filling with water from heaven. We did not ask for any drink.

Thus refreshed, we plodded westward along the northern shore of the lake, sometimes near the water, sometimes quite inland. The rain ceased, but oh, how the red soil stuck to our feet! It is a tufa soil, like the basis of the Roman cement, and wonderfully adhesive. It gathered to itself sticks and straws, and

then more mud, until each foot was a huge mass. If the mass was knocked off, it gathered again; so we meekly marched, all mud-laden, over meadow and stony field, until, two miles west of the Jordan, the ruins known as Tell Hûm were reached. Here we halted and explored, too full of interest to care for mud, or for the dripping grass and weeds which grow thick about the fallen houses, now reduced to piles of basalt and limestone.

But what is the exceeding interest attaching to these stone-heaps of Tell Hûm, rising amid the grass

- TELL HÛM—CAPERNAUM.

and weeds of the plain? Is not the land full of ruined towns and cities? Ah yes, but of all these cities there was *one* which was called Christ's "own city," and where he was said to be "at home." That city

was Capernaum, and I believe that this Tell Hûm is the ruin-covered site of old Capernaum. Hence its exceeding interest.

In Capernaum, you will remember, was the synagogue built by the pious centurion in which Jesus of Nazareth often taught. It was in Capernaum that he healed this centurion's servant by a word. There, too, he healed the sick of the palsy who was let down to his feet through the broken roof of the house in which he taught, because of the throng. And it was in this same synagogue, built by the godly Roman soldier, that he addressed to the astonished multitude who crowded to hear him those unparalleled utterances given in the sixth chapter of John: "I am the Bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."*

"And do you think," you ask, "that these mounds of stone are the ruined houses of that Capernaum where our Master spent so much of his time and wrought such wondrous works? This pile of broken columns, capitals, fallen architraves,—think you that it may be the ruins of that synagogue in which he spoke? Was the custom-house where Levi heard the words, 'Follow me,' down there by the water-side? The house in which the Lord said to the sick of the palsy, 'Son, thy sins be forgiven thee,'—has it crumbled into one of these black basalt heaps?"

I believe that the answer to these questions should be Yes—that Tell Hûm is all that remains of Caper-

* John vi. 35, 47, 59.

naum. Yet so fearfully have the woes pronounced upon Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida, "wherein most of his mighty works were done," been fulfilled that the learned dispute as to the places where they stood.*

The ruins at Tell Hûm cover a length of half a mile by a breadth of a quarter of a mile, on a fertile plain slightly elevated above the beach and sloping gently to the hills on the north-west, behind which rise the highest mountains of Galilee. Near the lake is a square pile of masonry which seems to have been constructed of materials taken from older buildings, probably from the "White Synagogue," whose ruins lie a little distance inland. This synagogue must have been one of the most elegant structures in Palestine. It was built of a fine white crystalline limestone (marble, it may fairly be called), and was in size seventy-five by fifty-six feet.

RUINS OF SYNAGOGUE AT TELL HÛM.

* A number of eminent scholars and travelers have given to Khan Minych the honor of being the site of Capernaum, but, as it seems to me, on insufficient grounds. It would be foreign to my purpose to detail the reasons for giving the preference to Tell Hûm. The arguments will be found well stated in Professor Bartlett's *From Egypt to Palestine*.

It was dug out by Captain Wilson, who uncovered several capitals of the Corinthian order, single and double columns, and pedestals in their original position. Coming after his excavations, we had the advantage of his toil, and stood amid these venerable fragments asking ourselves whether of a truth they had echoed the words of Him who spake as never man spake. Says Captain Wilson:* "If Tell Hûm be Capernaum, this is without a doubt the synagogue built by the Roman centurion (Luke vii. 4, 5), and one of the most sacred places on earth. It was in this building that our Lord gave the well-known discourse in John vi., and it was not without a certain strange feeling that on turning over a large block we found the pot of manna engraved on its face, and remembered the words, 'I am that Bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.'"

Rather more than two miles north of Tell Hûm are the ruins of another considerable town, as extensive as those at Tell Hûm. The Arabic name of this place, Kerâzeh, points unmistakably to the long-lost Chorazin.

We thus have Capernaum and Chorazin, but where is Bethsaida? Let us go farther along the lakeside, and it may be that we shall have reason to conclude that it also may be given a location.

From Tell Hûm we pushed on over a plain from a quarter to a half mile broad, with the sloping hills on our right, and the lake, all covered with white caps, on our left. The next point of interest, Et-Tâbghah, was about two miles distant. Though stimulated by

* *Recovery of Jerusalem*, p. 269.

all the eagerness of pilgrims to the Holy Land, the walk was heavy work, and some of our company toward the close almost gave out. But we all made Et-Tâbghah, or Ain et-Tâbghah, in due time.

This certainly is one of the prettiest spots in the circuit of the lake. A little bay, with rocks above and a shelly beach below, sweeps in a gentle curve from north-east to south-west. Grandly copious springs, gushing from the hilly slope just back of the beach, send a stream of warm water dashing down through a jungle of oleanders, reeds and thorny shrubbery, into the lake. An old mill, square and solid, whose stones are still turned by the stream, forms a picturesque addition to the view. But we came upon Et-Tâbghah from its landward side in our walk down the shore from Tell Hûm. Here, in a large octagonal stone reservoir, the water of the fountains is collected. In the olden time, when the reservoir was perfect, the water rose to a height of twenty feet, and was distributed to the plain by an aqueduct which passed along the hillsides to Gennesaret. But, as with everything else in this abused land calling for care, it is broken, and holds but two feet of the beautifully clear water, in which bulrushes grow undisturbed by man. This must be the "Fountain of Capharnaome," or Capernaum, of which Josephus writes. But what ancient town or village is represented by Et-Tâbghah? Is it not Bethsaida, the home of the fishermen Peter and Andrew, and of the sons of Zebedee? Beth-saida means "Fish-house." It has been pronounced unlikely that on so small a body of water there could be two towns of the same name, and the fact of a Beth-

saida (Julias) at the northern extremity of the lake is beyond dispute. But in a body of water so full of fish, and where fishing was so important a calling, the existence of two places called each the Fish-house is quite credible; nor is it easy to interpret the Gospel narratives without placing a Bethsaida about where Et-Tâbghah now is. In fact, Et-Tâbghah well meets the indications of the case, and may fairly be called the home of the fishermen who left their boats and nets to follow Jesus and become fishers of men.

The lake hereabout swarms with fish. Yes, and at this very moment a swarthy fisherman stands in the

water and casts
his net; nor is he
unsuccessful. Ab-

dou buys a string
of his fish for our
breakfast on the
morrow—fish like
perch, eight or ten
inches long. Two

FISH OF THE SEA OF GALILEE.

or three mat huts on the beach afford shelter to the fishermen. Little plots of ground too are tilled.

Leaving the reservoir, we picked our way with some trouble, through tangled thicket and over streamlets, toward the beach. Reaching the main stream, a bright, leaping rivulet, we stopped to find a crossing, but were arrested by a kindly voice and safely carried over on the back of a barelegged son of Bethsaida. And here a grateful sight greets our eyes. Our horses are coming over the hill at Khân Minyeh to meet us. Ah, Abdallah! your temper is not all that it might be and

should be, but your face is charming just now at Bethsaida, and your back is even better than your face. So on to Khân Minyeh, which is now less than a mile distant.

The lake is the feeding-ground of great numbers of waterfowl. Gulls, ducks, cormorants and pelicans frequent the water; storks, herons and snipe feed along its beach. On the land side you meet land-birds, while the eagle soars high over shore and lake, and the vulture sweeps with broad pinions, his keen eye turned earthward in search of food.

The ride was short and restful after our long tramp, skirting the shore until a jutting cliff (a lava-stream from some volcano of geologic antiquity) crossed and blocked our path. Most conveniently for us, a roadway is cut through the hard basaltic rock in which our horses easily passed the cliff. Who cut that channel? and why? It is neither more nor less than a portion of an aqueduct by which the water of the fountains of Tâbghah could be carried for irrigation to the Plain of Gennesaret. The built-up portion of the aqueduct is now almost obliterated, but this cut in the basalt will last as long as man lasts on the earth, telling of the culture of Palestine when Christ dwelt in it. To judge of the past condition of the Land of Promise by its present state were most deceptive.

And now we looked out upon the plain again, and down, at the foot of the low cliff, upon the "Fountain of the Fig," Ain et-Tîn, which marks Khân Minyeh. On the grassy plain beside the fountain stood our tents, always a welcome sight to wet and weary travelers, and especially so this afternoon, when we were

especially wet and weary. However, the hot cup of tea which soon appeared refreshed us, and we spent

the closing day in an inspection of what Khân Minyeh has to show. This is not much. There are mounds which may conceal ruins of interest, but the large, dilapidated khân is an old Saracenic caravanserai, which would be vastly

AIN ET TÎN, AT KHÂN MINYEH.

curious in our new country, but goes for little by the Sea of Galilee, where you are asking for remains dating back to the days of the apostles and their great Teacher. The ruinous khân afforded a welcome shelter to our horses and mules, as well as to the muleteers. It was built to accommodate caravans passing between Egypt and Damascus.

The fountain forms a pool at the foot of the cliff but little above the level of the lake. In fact, the lake sometimes mingles its waters with those of the spring. It takes its name, "Fountain of the Fig," from a large fig tree which overhangs it.

As we have said, there are scholars who earnestly maintain that Capernaum stood here, at the northern end of the Plain of Gennesaret; yet others warmly argue that this is the site of Bethsaida. This sharp

controversy as to where the guilty cities stood shows clearly how fully the "woes" pronounced by Christ have been fulfilled. Exalted to heaven in the privileges which they abused and the offers which they rejected, they have been cast down to the depths of absolute destruction.

At night the jackals gave us a concert equal to any with which we had been favored since our first night

SYRIAN JACKAL (*Canis aureus*).

under canvas at Lydda. Such yelping as saluted our ears it were hard to describe. If Samson had needed three hundred of these "foxes," there would have been no question as to the supply, if only he could have caught them. Our Chaya had an encounter with one big fellow in the afternoon. He told us that it came at him with open mouth. I had not supposed that the jackal would attack a man. Chaya's testimony must be weighed by the critical reader, but that he shot the creature directly in the head was beyond question, for there it was, stark and stiff, at our feet. Some of our company amused themselves by standing Mr. Jackal on his stiffened legs near the kitchen-tent, much to

the confusion of our two dogs, who were greatly puzzled by his stolid indifference to their loud-mouthed threats.

But the long day, a day of hard work yet of extreme satisfaction, came to a close. After our wonted family-worship, reading of Him who has made this region sacred beyond compare, we went to sleep to the music of the jackals' sharp cries and the solemn roar of the wind-vexed Sea of Galilee dashing upon its beach.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CIRCUIT OF THE LAKE.

BEFORE taking leave of the Sea of Galilee the reader may wish to pass around it rapidly, noting the relations of the localities which give it so deep an interest, not to the Christian only, but to the intelligent of every creed and nation.

Starting at its northern extremity, where the Jordan pours its (here) slowly-moving and muddy stream into the blue lake, and passing westward, after two miles you reach Tell Hûm, with Kerâzeh in the hills two and a half miles north of its ruins. These we identify with Capernaum and Chorazin. A short two miles farther south-westward and you come to the Ain et-Tâbghah, with its grand springs and pretty bay—our Bethsaida. Three-quarters of a mile farther, and Ain et-Tîn (The Fountain of the Fig) nestles beneath the basaltic promontory which here juts into the lake. Near the fountain are the ruins of the Khân Minyeh. Here you are at the northern point of the Plain of Gennesaret, which stretches southward two and a half miles along the shore to El-Mejdel, the old Magdala. Opening into the plain are three valleys which part the western hills. The most southern of these is the Wâdy Hamân (The Valley of Doves), a

magnificent gorge, with walls of almost perpendicular rock a thousand feet in height. In the southern face of this wâdy are the caves of Arbela, in which strong bands of robbers had their haunts and homes in the

THE SEA OF GALILEE.

days of Herod the Great. These cave-homes, like eagles' nests far up the cliffs, were almost inaccessible to strangers, and could not be taken from below when held by the desperate outlaws who made them their fastnesses. Josephus tells us that Herod's soldiers only succeeded in destroying the robbers by letting

down from above cages or boxes filled with armed men. These soldiers attacked the robbers with fire, and, dragging them out with hooks, hurled them to the rocks below.

A little beyond Mejdél is the spot where Dalmanutha must have stood in a little recess in the hills, which here come boldly down to the water's edge.

Three miles south by east from Magdala is Tubariyeh, the Tiberias of our Saviour's days, but covering much less ground than did the ancient city. It stands in a narrow and rough plain between the water and the hills. A mile and a quarter south of Tiberias are the Hot Springs. The springs and the baths which they supply are enclosed in a mean stone house; they are sulphurous and steaming, with a temperature of 131° to 140° , and flow into the lake. The baths are esteemed remedial for a number of diseases, but there are few now to use them. The whole of the plain between the baths and Tubariyeh is rough with ruins, probably of the houses of old Tiberias.

Pass on to the foot of the sea and you find Kerak, only a name, not a town, but recalling the city Tarichea, famous for its capture by the Romans under Titus, a horrid slaughter of Jewish prisoners after the surrender, and a sea-fight on the lake, in which the Romans, with a numerous fleet of boats, exterminated the army on the Jewish flotilla with merciless barbarity.

A little beyond Kerak you will come upon the Jordan, which here makes its exit from the lake.

The valley of the Jordan, the "Ghor," at this point is broad and open on the east side of the river. The

name of Gadara is associated with the south-eastern lake-district, but it is not on or near the lake; it is seven miles away to the south-east, over the river Jarmak, the Hieromax of ancient days. The poor

ROCK-TOMB OF GADARA.

Arab village of Um-Keis holds the site, some of its people dwelling in the tombs belonging to the old city. Noble ruins testify that a city of wealth and luxury was here.

About three miles east of the Jordan is a ruin

which is supposed to mark the site of the ancient Hippos, one of the cities of the Decapolis. From this ruin, following the coast northward, you find the mountain on which Gamala stood, nearly opposite Tiberias. This strongly-fortified citadel and city is not mentioned in the Gospels, but is famed for its almost impregnable position and for its siege and capture by the Romans under Vespasian (A. D. 69).

Farther north again, at the mouth of the Wâdy Semakh and about opposite Magdala, are the ruins of a town known as Kersa or Gersa or Khersa by the Arabs, no doubt the Gergesa of our Saviour's time. Thompson, Wilson and MacGregor have all described a cliff descending to the beach a little south of Kersa, well suited to the scene of the casting out of the devils from the two demoniacs in the "country of the Gergesenes,"* when the devils went into a herd

* The use, in our version, of the terms "country of the Gergesenes" by Matthew, and "country of the Gadarenes" by Mark (v. 1) and Luke (viii. 26), in connection with the healing of the demoniacs and the destruction of the swine, opens an interesting question which has been discussed at length by scholars and travelers. The ancient Greek copies of these Gospels give various spellings—the country of the Gergesenes, Gerasenes, Gadarenes. Some scholars prefer to read Gadarenes in all the Gospels. We think the true explanation is, that the large city of Gadara, lying about seven miles south-east of the Sea of Galilee, gave name to the district about it, "the country of the Gadarenes." Mark and Luke, writing for distant Greeks and Romans, use this term naturally and properly. But the little town of Gergesa, now represented by Kersa or Gersa, would be well known to Matthew, whose office was at Capernaum. Hence, Matthew speaks of the "country of the Gergesenes." That the swine ran from Gadara to the sea is utterly improbable, nor does either Gospel so assert. But the bluff near Kersa is so precipitous that swine rushing down it would be carried by the impetus into the water.

of swine, and "the whole herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters." * North of Kersa there is little associated with Scripture story until you reach the Plain of Batîha,† about as large as the Plain of Gennesaret, at the north-eastern corner of the lake, extending around its shore to where the Jordan enters the sea. This plain was no doubt that on which our Saviour made the people sit down on the grass, five thousand men, by companies, that they might be fed with five loaves and two fishes.‡

There is no question that Bethsaida Julias stood at this northern end of the lake, but whether upon the lake at the entrance of the Jordan, or two miles north of it, where are ruins called by the Arabs Et-Tell, "The Heap," is not absolutely known. It was after the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand wrought in this region of Bethsaida by our Lord that he sent his disciples away by boat to the western side, whilst he retired to the mountains to be alone with God in prayer. And it was from this region that he followed his disciples, walking upon the water, whilst they toiled in rowing against a contrary wind, and said to the affrighted men, "It is I; be not afraid." §

Authorities differ as to the dimensions of the Sea of Galilee. The map of the Palestine Exploration Fund makes its length twelve and seven-eighths statute, or fourteen and eight-tenths English, miles. Its greatest breadth is about seven English miles.

* Matt. viii. 32.

† Spelled *Butaha* in the map at the head of this chapter.

‡ Luke ix. 12-17.

§ John vi. 15-20.

CHAPTER XXII.

FROM THE SEA OF GALILEE TO SAFED.

THE shortest route from the Sea of Galilee to Bâniâs and Damascus, and the one commonly taken by tourists, goes northward parallel with the Jordan and Lake Hûleh, but it misses one of the most interesting spots of these "borders of Zebulon and Naphtali"—Safed, famed as one of the four holy cities of the Jews, but more famed for its glorious outlook over the whole land of Galilee. Well may it have a glorious outlook, since it stands on the mountain-top two thousand seven hundred and seventy feet above the Mediterranean, three thousand four hundred and fifty feet above our camp beside the Sea of Galilee. Tradition makes it the "city set on a hill which cannot be hid" by which our Lord, in his Sermon on the Mount, illustrated the shining of the good man's life. That it is a city set on a hill is beyond debate, and that he could have pointed to it from the Horns of Hattîn is also certain; beyond this we may not assert. Safed we were determined not to miss.

But if we were not to miss Safed, and if we were to reach Damascus, as we had resolved, before the Sabbath, we must be off to-day (Tuesday, April 1).

This, however, did not please our dragoman and the muleteers. Nor was it strange that they were loath to start. True, it is only a four hours' ride to Safed, but our tents were soaked with the rain of the preceding day and night, and would make heavy carriage for the mules up the mountain. The muleteers growled and Abdou remonstrated, but go we must; and go we did, at eleven o'clock, when the rain-saturated canvas was partially dried. Everything was packed—tents, beds, bedding, bedsteads, tables, chairs, kitchen furniture, provisions and personal baggage; our horses and mules were loaded, and then the cavalcade left the hot meadow beside Khân Minyeh and the shores of the lake to climb the mountain-path to Safed.

A rough road it is of a truth—up and up, and still up. In places the jagged edges of the rock were most trying to our heavily-loaded mules, and even to our horses with only their riders to carry. But the mules patiently surmounted all obstacles, whilst the horses cared little for them; they are used to going over the rocks. Indeed, so were we by this time. But there is one delightful feature of the journey—the look back from time to time upon the lake in its sunken bed, with every locality in its circuit full in sight. As you ascend the hills every view is a fresh and seemingly more charming one. The eye rests on the Jordan in its green valley, with tortuous windings approaching and then entering the tranquil lake, and then slowly takes in the lake itself, with each hill and plain and mountain on its shores. The sight is varied and beautiful in itself, but with the holy associations which cluster about it, it has an unspeakable fascination,

from which it is hard to tear yourself to turn again to the prose of the rugged mountain-path. •

Halfway up, on a rolling plain, stands the caravanserai—Khân Jubb Yûsef, “Inn of the Well of Joseph.” The Mohammedans believe that it was into one of the cisterns here that Joseph was thrust by his brethren. They are somewhat vague in their geographical ideas, but the khân holds its title nevertheless. It seems hardly fair to Joseph that his name should be associated with this filthy khân, but we must remember that the title is a misnomer, for Dothan lies far to the south, amid the mountains of Samaria. Yet the khân, though dilapidated, is an interesting sample of the Oriental caravanserai. A solidly-built stone quadrangle faces on a square interior courtyard. The walls are blank without, but, riding in at the one gateway, over-arched by the second story of the khân, you find yourself in a court on which the rooms of the caravanserai face on three sides. The rooms of the fourth side open into the entrance-way. The apartments of the first floor are arched, and serve for the entertainment of man and beast, especially of the beast, if vermin be included with larger cattle. A stone stairway ascends to the second floor, where are rooms for the more honored guests. With the heavy gates closed, such a caravanserai would be a fort capable of defence as well as a resting-place for caravans.

But Khân Jubb Yûsef, like other old buildings in Syria, is falling into ruin and encumbered with filth. Just now a caravan of Damascus tradesmen were occupying it, using some of the rooms for their bales of goods, some for their own entertainment and others

for their beasts. Without the *khân* their herds of camels, asses and mules were grazing on the hillside, making a truly patriarchal scene. We were in the position of that honored family who had sought such shelter at Bethlehem, but for whom there was "no room in the inn." However, we managed to secure a refuge in a dirty corner under a broken arch whilst we took our luncheon. In good weather we should

AN EASTERN CARAVANSERAI.—Not that of *Khân Jubh Yûsef*, but illustrating the structure of the caravanserai.

have preferred the open air, but it was chilly and wet without, so that a dry stone for a seat was not to be despised, even though the odors of the place were not those of "Araby the Blest."

Noting the building of the *khân*, with alternate layers of the black basalt and the white limestone of the region, I fancied that the fashion of alternating the black and white lines of stone, so often seen in the great buildings of Italy and Egypt, must have come from this belt of land or from one having the same geological characteristics. To ornament their edifices

thus would be a most natural thing here—indeed, an inevitable first step from the putting together of the black and white stones in any manner. The Saracens would carry the fashion to Egypt and to the northern coast of Africa, and then to Southern Europe, where it is illustrated in the cathedrals.

As there were no charms about Khân Jubb Yûsef to tempt us to prolong our stay, we pushed on over the brown hills until the oval summit on which Safed is perched came in sight. The mountain is peculiar in its isolated peak, and the city which occupies it is also peculiar. The houses climb the hill, terrace above terrace, so that often the flat mortared roof of one is the street-way of that above. The summit of the peak is occupied by the ruins of the castle, encircled by a dry moat a half mile in circuit. You can ride into this moat from the country below. Two other portions of the town are separated from this central peak by the depression running around it, and face it.

Safed suffered fearfully by the Syrian earthquake of 1837. The hills rocked and gaped, tumbling the houses above upon those below, tier after tier, overwhelming, mangling, burying their inhabitants. Out of its nine thousand people it is supposed that not less than five thousand were killed. Scenes more horrible than those described by Dr. Thomson, who came to relieve the sufferers, are not often witnessed in our world. The Jews have rebuilt their quarter of the city, and Christians and Mohammedans have repaired their homes, so that Safed now wears a look of brightness quite unusual in Syrian towns.

Just beneath the central summit a promontory looks

southward over the hills and unto the Sea of Galilee. Here our men pitched the tents and tethered horses and mules, whilst we climbed to the ruined castle to enjoy the magnificent view. A sea of blue mountains swelled around us like billows suddenly congealed. These are the Galilean hills, where dwelt of old the tribes of Naphtali, Asher and Zebulon. Still farther south rose Tabor, within the bounds of Issachar. To the east lay the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh, beyond Jordan. We looked *down* from our height upon the elevated plain of the Hauran, which stretches eastward farther than eye can reach, with the mountains rising in ridges and peaks from its general level. The Sea of Galilee seemed to lie just at our feet. It was hard to believe that long hours of tedious travel lay between it and us.

As night closed in upon our camp on this mountain-height the air grew so cold and chill that we were glad to creep into our beds for warmth. With the ensuing day our fair weather commenced. From March 2d to April 2d we had faced a rough season. Wet days, chilly days, stormy days, had been many—really fine days few. We fully learned that whilst the weather of Palestine from March 15th to April 1st *may* be favorable, it also may be unfavorable. We had looked for rain from the 1st to the middle of March, and our anticipations were more than realized; but we had not expected to encounter so much rough weather from the middle to the end of the month. Seasons vary widely in this respect in different years, but we learned that rain may be expected up to the end of March, and may be met in April.

I had often thought of the Master as toiling under a hot Eastern sun, thirsty, faint and weary. I had not so much thought of him as facing chill rains, piercing winds, hail and snow. All these he must have encountered and endured many a time in his journeys on foot up and down this land.

But now the rains were past and gone, and we were to have four weeks of charming weather—the choice weather of the year for travel in Palestine and Syria.

The genial sunshine of the morning dispersed the chill and cloud of the night. The misty masses hanging over the lake broke and dissolved. Its shores came clearly out as we stood on the brow of the hill on which we camped. Long we looked, for we were to leave this consecrated sea and journey northward to new scenes.

A Moslem burial-place is here. In the mortar of the tombs little pots are sunk for flowers and green twigs—a pleasant touch of humanity. A shepherd came up the hill, followed by his flock. Some of the sheep followed him closely, affectionately clinging to his steps; others lagged, and then ran to catch up with the steady followers; others, still, though not willing to be left behind entirely or counted out of the flock, seemed more in-

THE SYRIAN SHEPHERD.

terested in settling little difficulties with their brethren than in heeding the shepherd's call. Not altogether unlike the Good Shepherd's flock are the Safed sheep.

We were now nearing the northern boundary of the Holy Land, purposing to pass the ancient Kedesh-Naphtali and to turn eastward, above Lake Hûleh, to Cæsarea Philippi (now Bâniâs), and thence, across and beside the lower ridges of Mount Hermon, to Damascus. Since our first day's march, to Meis el-Jebel, would occupy but six hours, we made a late start to give our wet tents a chance to dry in the genial morning sunshine.

As we left Safed we noticed a man rolling the roof of his house with an ordinary roller, such as is used for hardening garden-walks with us. To transfer the garden-roller to *our* house-roofs would be a difficult job, but nothing is easier with the flat roofs of the houses of Palestine, reached by a flight of steps without the house. In the poorer homes the roof is covered with brush, and then with earth a foot in thickness, in place of cement. Grass and weeds take root in it, and the rains dissolve it unless well compacted. Hence the use of the roller for its protection. If neglected, these earth-roofs become soaked with the rain, which then leaks in dirty drops or in streamlets into the house below, until at length the roof falls in, it may be to bury a part or all of a family under an earthy avalanche. Of course, the grass springing up on such a roof will be scorched by the burning sun in the dry Syrian summer. Referring to this, David says of the wicked, "Let them be as the grass upon

the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up." *

But what mean these two poles supporting a wire across the road at the edge of the town? "Can it be a telegraph-wire?" you ask. . We reply, "No; that is a little device of the Safed Jews, whom you see hereabout with long love-locks hanging beside their cheeks." These Jews are like those of the times of Christ in the absurd scrupulosity of their rules for Sabbath observance. They hold it sinful to carry anything *outside of the city-gates* on the Sabbath; even to carry a handkerchief without the gates would be a breach of the Sabbath. Unhappily, Safed has no gates, so that there is no Safed-within-the-gates where things needful may be borne in holy time. What is to be done? These two poles, with the wire stretched between their tops, form an imaginary gate, within which needful articles may be carried on the Sabbath! It was just such nonsense as this, destructive of true reverence for God's law, that our Lord rebuked, and against which he protested by healing the sick on the Sabbath. The Sabbath "made for man" was perverted into an absurdly irrational bondage; Christ restored it to its true place as a blessing and privilege, not a servitude.

Girls are clustering about the fountains, each with her water-jar, which she fills, raises upon her head, and then starts off in her baggy pants, but with sturdy tread, for her home. Women bearing the "pitcher of water" you see everywhere; men, very rarely. Perhaps it was on this account that it was given to the

* Ps. cxxix. 6, 7.

disciples as a token of him whom they were to follow to secure a place for the last Passover in Jerusalem that they should meet "a man" bearing a pitcher of water. A little boy with yellow jacket and vest, blue Turkish trousers, red fez, and long hair in two plaits meeting in one and hanging down his back, stares at us with his great black eyes. We are as strange to him as he to us, though less brilliantly clad. He would be odd enough among a group of American boys.

A little farther on and we see a characteristic sheepfold. It consists of a large enclosure open to the sky,

SYRIAN SHEEPFOLD.

surrounded by a stone wall. Opening into the enclosure on one side are arched rooms for the shelter of the shepherds by night and of the flocks also in in-

clement weather. Within this fold the sheep are protected from wolves and kept under the eye of the shepherd. The "thief" and the "robber"* cannot molest the flock without awakening their protectors. The shepherd enters by the door into the fold; the robber must "climb up some other way." And if the flock be attacked with violence, by wolf or robber climbing over the wall, the good shepherd fights for his sheep to wounds, and death if need be, giving his life for the sheep.

The venerable olive trees, too, attract our attention, as several times before. Many of them are evidently centuries old, with gnarled trunks fifteen to twenty feet or more in circumference. Sometimes they are so hollowed out by decay that the trunk is but a shell, and even when the time shall come for the old shell to fall the young trunks growing up from the root will perpetuate its life and fruit-bearing for still other centuries. Hence it is hard to say how old these venerable trees may be.

But stop on this rounded projecting hill, for here is a view as beautiful as it is new to the traveler from the south. The descent, at first steep, grows more gentle as it nears the plain, to which it rolls down in cultivated slopes. Across the plain glitters the smooth surface of a lake. It is the Lake Hûleh of the present, the "Waters of Merom" of the past, which receives the young Jordan as it comes from the feet of Lebanon and Hermon, and then sends it on its way southward to the Sea of Galilee. Beyond the lake, to the north, lies the Ard el-Hûleh, the Hûleh plain,

* John x.

at this distance an attractive carpet of velvet smoothness, but nearer, in part a marsh overgrown with rushes, the home of multitudes of wild birds and beasts; in part tilled lands watered by flowing streams or by canals, and a favorite camping-ground for the Bedouin Arabs. The papyrus, though not now found in Egypt, the land with which it is historically associated, flourishes in the marshes of the Ard el-Hûleh. The river Jordan is lost for a while amid the canebrakes; but its waters find their way through papyrus, cane and rush, until, gathering again, they enter Lake Hûleh. The lake is a pretty sheet of water, but shallow; it is four miles long by three and a half broad. At the Sea of Galilee, only ten miles away, the Jordan water is six hundred and eighty-two feet below the Mediterranean; here it is but eighteen feet below the sea-level. We will not stop to tell of the great battles fought in this region—of that in which Abraham, with his retainers, surprised and defeated the five kings from the East who had taken Lot captive at Sodom,* and had gone thus far on their homeward way; or of that in which Joshua routed the Canaanites†—but will drink in the noble prospect and march on.

We pass over another hill, and another and another, when Abdou cries, "Lebanon, doctór!" pointing to the long ridge in the north, silvery with its sheeting of snow. As we had just now looked eagerly down on the Waters of Merom, so now do we look eagerly up to Lebanon. The vapors borne by the west wind, condensing into fleecy clouds above its cold ridges, rolled away to water more eastern hills and plains.

* Gen. xiv. 14.

† Josh. xi. 7.

The first view of Lebanon sends a thrill through the traveler, but Hermon too shone across the plain of the Hûleh, nearer and grander than Lebanon. We

were approaching the great northern mountains which bounded the territory of the twelve tribes.

Now came a descent too steep in some places for riding even these Syrian horses. We were going down into the romantic ravine of the Wâdy

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DISTANT VIEW OF HERMON.

Hindâj, a picturesque glen enclosed by mountain-walls, reminding you of the cañons of our central States. At the bottom of the ravine a bright streamlet dashes merrily down on its way to Lake Hûleh. Here we dismounted for our nooning, on a bit of flowery sward beside the brook and near a mill of primitive construction. One could not ask a prettier spot for a picnic; the sward, the brook, the mountains topped by rocky precipices and the cloud-flecked sky,—all were perfect. Yet we looked anxiously up to the cliff over which we had come, wondering whether our camp-train would reach it in safety, for the way that tried our horses would be more trying to the heavily-loaded mules. It was a relief to see the train of men and mules descending the mountain, and to

catch the music of their tinkling bells. Ginger-pop, our inseparable companion, the faithful carrier of our luncheon, discovered his friends afar off and gave voice to our congratulations in his best bray. At ease with regard to our *impedimenta*, we enjoyed our rest in this beautiful vale.

Looking at the bright brook, the question came to me, Would these waters dance so gayly and sing so merrily if they knew that they were upon their way through jungles and over rocks to the bitterness and solitude of the Dead Sea? Yes, they may be merry and sing, even with the Dead Sea before them, for they are not to be holden of that Sea of Death. From it they will be called up to the blue skies and borne on the wings of the wind to rain blessings on some thirsty land. And may we not in a parable here see ourselves? Shall not we also be called up on high from the sea of Death, leaving our sorrows and our impurities below, and be sent on missions of love to now unknown portions of our Father's realms?

We emerged from the Wâdy Hindâj by a sloping path up its northern side, and soon passed a village of most novel appearance for this land. Its poor houses all had high-peaked roofs of thatch. But they are not inhabited by Syrians or Arabs. It is a village built by peasants from Algeria in North Africa, who followed their chief, Abd el-Kâder, into Syria, rather than live at home under their French conquerors. Yet it must be a trying banishment to these poor Algerines. Their brave old chief resides in Damascus.

The rock-cut tombs where the fathers of Naphtali

once slept are now open to the way and rifled of their contents. Some are put to use as sheepfolds, whilst their richly-carved stone coffins answer for watering-troughs. Some explorers judge that they have found hereabout Hazor, the city of King Jabin, who confederated the chiefs of Northern Canaan to resist the advance of Joshua with his victorious warriors, and who was so crushingly defeated by the Hebrew leader. Jabin's city must have been in this region, but just where we cannot say.

However it may be as to Hazor, a site of deep interest, which cannot be questioned, is soon reached—Kades, the ancient Kedesh-Naphtali. It is now a little village with Moslem inhabitants. Unlike the many towns we had visited on rocky hilltops, Kedesh-Naphtali occupies a gently-sloping descent to a pretty vale. The vale is fertile as well as pretty, but is afflicted with a malaria as baneful as that of the Roman Campagna, and in the hot months with hosts of hungry mosquitoes. The ruins of edifices of the Roman period are unusually noticeable, but they have an interest for the traveler who views them which they cannot have for the reader, who does not enjoy that privilege, and who may well be spared a description of them.

Kedesh-Naphtali, after its conquest by Joshua, became a city of refuge to which unfortunate manslayers in the north-west of Palestine could fly. It was the home of Barak, who gathered his army hither from the northern tribes—Zebulon and Naphtali—for the conflict with their Canaanite oppressors under Sisera, whose defeat in the Plain of Esdraelon was sung so

grandly by Deborah :* "Zebulon and Naphtali were a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death in the high places of the field. The kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera. The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon."

It was from the hills and upland plains and valleys around us that the men were gathered who marched from Kedesh (or Kadesh) to Tabor, and thence to victory in the Plain of Jezreel.

But alas for the glory of Kedesh! An enterprising Damascene is cutting up the blocks from its temple-walls to sell them for building-stones in Damascus!

An hour and a half farther and we camp at Meis el-Jebel, a small town of Metâwilehs, facing an upland basin, as does Nazareth, with no broad outlook, yet pleasantly surrounded by orchards of mulberry and fig trees and fields of grain and lentiles.

* Judg. v. 18-21.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DAN AND BÁNIÁS—CÆSAREA PHILIPPI.

WE were up at six and off at half-past seven, with a bright sun in the east and charming spring breezes sweeping over hill and valley. How grateful was this fair weather after the cold rains we had endured! The fields were smiling, the trees were budding and the flowers were blooming. The little birds sang for joy, crested larks trilling out sweet music, and our songs rose with theirs. It was of such a morning as this that the royal Hebrew poet, Solomon, wrote :

“ Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away.
For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the dove is heard in our land.
The fig tree putteth forth her green figs,
And the vines are fragrant with the tender grape.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.” *

Down into a wide basin of red earth, planted with wheat and lentiles, we rode in single file. The women of the village needed no poet's call to “arise” (that

* Song of Sol. ii. 10-13.

they were "fair ones" I may not aver); they were up and scattered through the unfenced wheat-fields, busily engaged in pulling up the weeds that grow amid the wheat. The weeds which they gathered out were not "tares," but plants easily distinguishable from the wheat. It did not look like easy or pleasant work, this stooping amid the wet grain to pull up weeds, but the poor things seemed to be merry enough, for their tongues ran swift and loud and long. The women of Syria are accustomed to labor, and take it as a matter of course.

The lentile is a plant of the pea family, and has been commonly cultivated in Syria and Egypt from the most ancient times. It was a pottage of these red lentile peas for which Esau, hungry and faint,* bartered his birthright. You may have a dish of this same red pottage in Syria to-day for a much more moderate price than that paid by Esau.

Our course was due north, parallel with the Jordan Valley, the Ard el-Hüleh. Up hill and down hill we went, and up and down again and again. Houses we saw none, farms none, on these neglected hills. A group of long-necked camels grazing on the mountain-side attracted

LENTILES.

* Gen. xxv. 29, 30.

our attention. They belonged to the Bedouin Arabs, whose black tents of goat's-hair cloth were pitched a

little lower down in a sheltered spot among the hills, yet so low and so like the soil that they were scarce noticeable a little distance away. At the foot of the hill we meet the Bedouin women. They are clad in gowns of coarse blue cotton cloth. The lower lip and the lower part of

THE ARAB'S TENT.

the face are tattooed with black or deep-blue spots—not to the improvement of their beauty, as it seems to us. Yet, no doubt, these dark spots heighten their charms in the Arab gallants' eyes, and hence in the eyes of the Arab women also.

These Bedouin women were bearing on their heads huge piles of wood. They are drudges and beasts of burden. Poor things! they need a deliverance which Christ's gospel only will give.

And now we came out on the brow of a mountain, where, turning to our right, we had a glorious view, north, east and south. At our feet glistened the Lake Hûleh, "the Waters of Merom;" to the north rose Hermon, kingly in his diadem of radiant white; to the south stretched the Jordan Valley; and in the east appeared the far-away mountains of Bashan.

But, as so often before, we must go down from high

places yet to ascend again. We move on until the ruins of the noble castle of Hûnîn are before us. Its moat is cut in the solid rock; its towers are broken, yet from them the eye feasts again on the beauty of the plain, through which the headwaters of the Jordan flow, with its setting of hill and mountain and its lake, now well to the south of us, flashing in the sunlight like burnished steel.

From Hûnîn, which is identified by Dr. Edward Robinson with Beth-rehob, we made our first serious divergence from the northward route

BEDOUIN GIRL.

which we had followed all the way from Jerusalem, turning eastward to Tell el-Kâdy, formerly Dan, Bâniâs, Mount Hermon and Damascus.

As we surveyed from the castle at Hunîn the rich plain on whose farther border the old Sidonian Laish, afterward Dan, stood, it looked attractive to our eyes. We could understand how attractive it must have

seemed to those Danites who, cramped for room at home, came hither thirty-three hundred years ago hunting for lands—"a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth." *

Leaving Abl, the old Abel Beth-maachah, on our

BEDOUIN ENCAMPMENT.

left, we turned thither across the upper edge of the Hûleh plain. We first descended to the lower lands

* Judg. xviii. 10.

of the plain, through which all the sources of the river Jordan flow, and soon reached the first of these sources of the sacred stream, the *Derdâra*, and crossed it by a bridge of a single arch. A little more than a half hour's ride, beyond the *Derdâra*, through rich pasture-lands, brought us to the *Hâsbâny*, a rushing stream chafing against fragments of basaltic rock, and the true Jordan by right of length, coming from the north of Hermon. We crossed the *Hâsbâny* on a bridge

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HEAD-WATERS OF THE JORDAN.

of three pointed stone arches, now much out of repair, and in an hour more reached a third source of the Jordan, the *Leddân*, which here starts from the earth, a larger stream at its birth than the *Hâsbâny*, which we had just crossed. Yet another source of the Jordan, the *Bâniâsy*, comes down from *Bâniâs*, a few miles

farther east. These streams all unite about five miles to the south of the Leddân fountain to form the true Jordan, there a stream forty-five feet wide.

But we will arrest our journey where the Leddân bursts from the rocks amid a thicket of oleanders—a glorious fountain, worthy to be a source of the most sacred river of our globe. Beside it rises a grassy mound on which grow two majestic oak trees. The mound is three hundred yards across, and crowned by ruins. The two oaks stand near the basin formed by the fountain. Under one of them is the tomb of a Moslem saint; under the other we stopped to rest whilst our horses grazed on the long grass of the hill. This hillock is now the Tell el-Kâdy, “The Mound of the Judge,” exactly replacing the Hebrew Dan, which means “judge.” It is the site of the Dan so famous as the northern town of Palestine, as Beersheba was the southern, in the phrase, “From Dan to Beersheba.” Here, yet earlier, stood the Laish which was seized by the unscrupulous Danites, its people being “quiet and secure” and “far from Zidon,” to which it belonged. From them it took its name of Dan. In the later days of Jeroboam it shared with Bethel the evil honor of being a seat of idolatrous worship, designed to wean the Israelites from the house of David reigning in Jerusalem, from whom Jeroboam had rent the ten northern tribes.*

* 1 Kings xii. 26–30: “And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David. If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam, king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam, king of

After visiting the ruins on the top of the "Tell," turning again to our overshadowing oak, I found a stranger, a Frank, seated beside my son, apparently in familiar converse with him. What was my surprise, when he turned, to recognize the face of one whom I had last seen a few months before in my Philadelphia home! It was the Rev. W. K. Eddy of Sidon, the fellow-student of four young Princeton theologians of our party, and the son of my own fellow-student, the Rev. W. W. Eddy, D. D., of Beirût. He had left America the preceding October, and at once had been put in charge of the Sidon station of the Syrian mission of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. Born in Syria, he speedily recalled the Arabic spoken in boyhood, and was prepared immediately to enter upon his noble work. The diocese of this young bishop of Sidon extends from the Mediterranean Sea to Hermon, and with its one hundred villages presents a field of effort broad enough to satisfy any amount of zeal and energy. On the preceding Sabbath Mr. Eddy had administered the communion to a little flock in a village on Mount Lebanon, receiving four persons to its communion, and on the coming Sabbath he was to celebrate the Lord's Supper with another little church upon the slope of rugged Hermon. We gladly added him to our company for the next two days of travel.

Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan."

Leaving Dan, you advance, and ascend as you advance, toward the foot of one of the spurs of great Hermon, where Bâniâs stands. Tell el-Kâdy is five hundred feet above the sea-level, while Bâniâs, an hour and a quarter to the east, stands on a terrace

THE BÂNIÂS SOURCE OF THE JORDAN

five hundred feet higher, or one thousand feet above the sea level. I had known that here was a noble spring gushing from the rocks and forming one of the sources of the Jordan, and that Bâniâs occupied a fair site where Cæsarea Philippi stood eighteen hundred years ago, but I was not prepared for the many

beauties of the spot. Its charms were a surprise to me. At the base of Hermon is a triangular terrace, with luxuriant olive-orchards and fields of grain. At the bottom of the cliff which bounds this terrace on the side toward Hermon is a gaping cavern, now dry, but once, as Josephus tells us, a pool fed by the fountain which gushed up within the cave. The stream now flows out from the rocks below the cavern, crystal pure and sparkling, and rushes down to the vale amid oleanders, ferns and overhanging vines. Its dashing waters, concealed by clustering shrubbery or glancing in the light, make a music delicious in this land, where water is precious as gold. The view from the terrace, southward over the plain and northward to Hermon's snow-crowned ridge, with the broken walls, arched gateways and shattered towers of old Cæsarea Philippi, is one of romantic and picturesque beauty. Yet this charming site is marred—as are so many others in this abused land—by the mean houses of the village which has replaced the brilliant city adorned by Herod Philip the tetrarch. Tangled thickets, naked fields and sordid huts occupy the spot in which wealth and luxury once combined with nature to frame an earthly paradise.

The earliest name of the place given us by history was Paneion, from the sanctuary of the Greek divinity Pan, who was worshiped in a shrine beside the cavern from which the great fountain poured its waters. Philip, son of Herod the Great, who had built a temple to Cæsar Augustus beside the fountain, enlarged and beautified the city, and named it Cæsarea in honor of the Roman emperor. To this Philippi was added,

making it Philip's Cæsarea, to distinguish it from the Cæsarea on the Mediterranean coast. But the old name, no doubt kept alive by the country-folk, returned in the course of time, and Cæsarea Panias has now become simply Bâniâs. It is startling to find that this, to us, out-of-the-way spot, was once a centre of wealth and fashion. When Titus had overthrown Jerusalem (A. D. 72) he brought hither his Jewish prisoners, and made them fight in gladiatorial shows in the theatre of Cæsarea Philippi for the amusement of its citizens. It was afterward held by Christians, Saracens, crusaders and Arabs, and finally sank into the desolation which the Turkish rule has spread over all Syria.

But the thought that touches the Christian heart is that Jesus visited this place. He trod this beautiful terrace and listened to the murmur of its rushing waters. Here it was, about six months before his crucifixion, that he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" And here the added question, "Who say ye that I am?" received the memorable confession of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Here too, there is every reason to believe, a week later, the Master led his three favored disciples "into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them." Looking up by night at a lofty peak, an offset from the great Hermon range, overhanging our camp and sharply outlined against the starry sky, I wondered whether it was on that mountain, now sleeping in the moonlight so silently, that the Son of God manifested his glory to his chosen followers. It may have been. That it was on one of the wooded mountain-tops near Cæsarea

THE REGION OF CAESAREA PHILIPPI-BANIY.

Philippi I do not doubt; and the belief crowns the region with a special sacredness.

Bânîâs wore an air of life during our visit to which it is not accustomed. It so happened that the greater part of the Palestine travelers of the season met there. Fifty-two European and American pilgrims, ladies as well as gentlemen, encamped, in four parties, on the grounds about the village and its fountain. The numerous tents, flying flags of England, America and Germany, and the large body of retainers, with the horses, mules and donkeys, made quite a stirring show. The villagers, however, did not seem prone to manifestations of lively curiosity. They gazed at us with but a languid interest in their sallow faces, which tell of the fevers that prevail in the autumn, engendered by miasma from the plain and marsh of the Hûleh. The Circassians now dwelling here have but a bad repute. Fifty thousand of these turbulent and reckless people, who were engaged in the massacres of the Bulgarians, were deported to Syria at the close of the Russo-Turkish war (1878). The native Syrians look upon them with dread and speak of them as "bad men." Walking like moving arsenals, with sword, dagger, pistol and gun, and with cartridges ornamenting their breasts, they are a terror to these villagers, and add yet another to the discordant elements which make popular unity in Syria impossible. It would seem to be the policy of the Turkish government to foster the enmities of race and creed which divide the people of Syria into hostile clans, so that they may not combine against her power. Druses and Maronites, Protestant, Greek and Latin Chris-

tians, Mohammedans and Jews, unite in cursing their oppressors, but cannot unite in a revolt against them. Their mutual animosities forbid it. The Turkish power holds the discordant races under its rule for the present. But how long this state of affairs can last, and what will come after it, are beyond our knowledge. It is a problem that baffles human wisdom. It is ours to give to the people of Syria the gospel, and commit their case to God. He may disclose his plan in modes not imagined by us.

We heard from Mr. Eddy, as we had heard from others, of the cruelty of the taxation by which the people are impoverished and robbed until many of them have lost heart and hope. The taxes are farmed out, much as in the old days of the Roman publicans, and unscrupulous collectors wring from the poor people their earnings with merciless rapacity. As every fruit tree is taxed, few are now planted. Sometimes more than the entire value of a crop is demanded as the tax. Olive-orchards are cut down by their owners, that they may not possess trees to be taxed. Grounds occupied by groves of mulberry, lemon and orange trees are made bare as the roadway by those whose living should come from them, who prefer to be penniless without taxes rather than worse than penniless with them.

Dr. Jessup, in his *Mohammedan Missionary Problem*, says of this system of farming tithes: "It is difficult for an Anglo-Saxon freeman to comprehend what is meant by collecting the tithes in the Turkish empire. The attention of Europe has often been called to the horrors and outrages incident to this relic of barbar-

ism. Many of the most humane and honest of the officers of the sultan have tried in vain to effect its abolition. The sultan himself has proposed it, but to no effect. In practical working it is somewhat after this fashion: Some wealthy Syrian, desiring to increase his wealth at the expense of his conscience, attends the annual auction at the head-quarters of the province and bids for the privilege of collecting the tithe, we will suppose, in the Ba'albek district. If the tithe of that district is estimated at five thousand pounds, he will bid six thousand pounds for the privilege of collecting five thousand pounds. At harvest-time the wheat and barley of each village are gathered on the village threshing-floors. After the tedious labor of threshing and winnowing is finished, the grain lies in heaps in the open air, awaiting the arrival of the *mul-tezim* of the tithes. Days pass on and he comes not. The people become desperate. The last year's supply of wheat is exhausted; there is no bread in the village; the children are hungry. Finally, the old men of the village go as humble petitioners to beg the *mul-tezim* to come to their relief. He answers that he is busy—he cannot come for a month, or at the least a fortnight. They beg and entreat, but all in vain. At length they offer him one-eighth of the crop if he will come. He is inexorable. If the district be remote from the influence of Europeans, they may be obliged, finally, to give the merciless extortioner one-fifth, one-fourth, or even one-half, of their crop; and from his decision there is no appeal. He is accompanied by armed horsemen, and the people have no way but silent, despairing submission."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CASTLE OF BÂNIÂS—HERMON—DAMASCUS.

HOW gloriously did the morning of April 4th break on the camp at Bâniâs! The cascades sang joyously amid their bowers of vine and shrub; the trees waved their green leaves to the waters; the birds echoed the song of the torrent and glance of the leaf, while the calm mountains reflected the warm sunlight on tree and shrub and bird and plain. Such days make horse and saddle welcome to the pilgrim. The cold and the rain are past; the summer heat is not yet. So Bâniâs, with its rushing streams, its orchards, its poor modern houses and its venerable ruins, is left, and our faces are set toward the more venerable capital of old Syria—Damascus—now only two days' journey distant.

But, though we left Bâniâs, the visit to its famed castle had been reserved for the morning.

The Castle of Bâniâs, the Kulat es-Subeibeh which formerly sat enthroned as a queen on the mountain rising behind Bâniâs, and a thousand feet above it, looking out over all the plain-land, is grand even in its overthrow.

You can ride up the steep hillside through the olive trees, which find good food among the stones,

and in an hour and a quarter you reach the foot of the peak on which the castle rests. There you leave your horses to the villagers who tend the olive-groves, and scramble up the rocky ascent and over the broken battlements into the noblest castle of Syria. Per-

CASTLE OF BÂNIÂS.

haps the glamour of romance enveloping this land misled me, but it seemed to me the grandest *castle-ruin* I had ever seen. Though far more completely destroyed, it is far grander, than the famed castle of Heidelberg, the boast of Germany, and recalls the

impression made by the cyclopean temple-structures of Upper Egypt. It is a thousand feet in length and two to three hundred feet in breadth, occupying a rocky head which juts southward and overhangs the lowlands on three sides of it. It is built of huge stones finely wrought, and is surrounded by a moat cut in the solid rock. Its ramparts, bastions and towers are broken, yet impressive in their overthrow. Vast water-cisterns are beneath its floors, some of them still holding water. At its eastern end is an inner citadel, standing on a higher point of rock than the remainder of the castle, from which it is separated by moat and rampart, and capable of defence if the almost impregnable castle were taken. The views from the ramparts are glorious as you look west, south or east over Northern Palestine and the Hauran. The architecture of the upper stonework is clearly Saracenic, but who first occupied this mountain and made it their fortress, or who laid the foundations of this stronghold, history fails to tell. Yet there can be little doubt that it was thus held as a rock of refuge by the old Canaanites or the Phœnicians, and that after them the Jew and the Roman occupied it, to be followed in turn by crusader and Saracen. It has been deserted for two hundred years, and now is but a ruin speaking of former grandeur. In one of the bastions is a stairway cut in the solid rock, going down into the darkness of the mountain—how far I know not. The belief of the country people that this stairway communicated with the town of Bâniâs is hardly to be entertained, yet what labor could affright the men who built such castles?

The existence of such structures in a land now so poverty-stricken is full of suggestions as to what the same land was two thousand and three thousand years ago. How unspeakably different must it have been in population, wealth and culture when princes would or could build such fortresses to hold it! And this is but one of a chain of strongholds that seems to have guarded the northern frontier of Palestine.

This fact testifies to the truthfulness of the scriptural representations of the population and power of the Land of Israel in its palmy days.

Our route lay along the south-eastern face of glorious Hermon, the *Jebel es-Sheikh*, or "Mountain-Chief," of the Arabs. Hermon must not be thought of as a mere peak. It is a mountain-range, substantially distinct, yet forming a part of the Anti-Lebanon, and extending thirty miles, in a crescent of snow-capped mountains, from the south-west to the north-east. You journey beside it from morning to evening, and at night encamp at *Kefr-Hauwar* with its white ridge resting on the dark sky and illumining your northern horizon. From this long, crescent-shaped ridge mountain-ribs jut out, declining to hills as they near the plain. These ribs you cross in making your way south of Hermon from *Bâniâs* to Damascus. But, though the region is rugged, it is far from being uninhabited. Numerous villages cluster on the hilltops or cling to their sides. Water-courses flow from Hermon's snows through ravines and into valleys, to find their way to the *Awaj*, the old *Pharpar* praised by *Naaman*. Upland plains fitted for culture appear, and then broad stretches of basaltic fragments, streams of

chilled lava from volcanoes long extinct, through which the horses pick their way slowly and with eyes attent.

The villages of Hermon are far more picturesque than those of Galilee, arresting the eye with a more lively interest. Indeed, some of them recall the charms of those groups of *châlets* that nestle amid the Swiss Alps. Their inhabitants, too, seem stronger in person and in character than the peasantry of the lower lands and lower latitudes.

The village of Ain Kunyeh, which lay to the south of our route, far up on a mountain-slope, caught our eyes soon after leaving Bâniâs. It is inhabited by that strange race, the Nusariyeh, believed by some to be the lineal descendants of the Canaanites of four thousand years ago, who were never extirpated by the Israelites. About fifty thousand of them inhabit the hill-country from Hermon northward. They keep their belief a secret, but it seems to be a compound of heathenism and Mohammedanism. Beyond this village stands a circle of sacred trees, religiously preserved where everything else in the shape of a tree is cut down for fuel. Is this one of the consecrated "high-places" marked as sacred from generation to generation since the time when Baal and Astarte were worshiped here? If we cannot affirm, neither can we deny it. It may be, and we will believe that it is.

Another village, Mejdél, also reached by us quite early in the day, is as distinct in its people and its religions from its neighbor, Ain Kunyeh, as from those of Judæa or Samaria. The town is truly alpine in look, with the central mass of snowy Hermon rising behind it, and strikingly superior to the hopeless

villages of the south, in its buildings and in all that indicates thrift. Its inhabitants are Druses and Christians. Our friend Eddy had a mission hither, for here are the home and the work of Abou Aseef, brave teacher and preacher of the gospel, who attested his heroic faith in his earlier years by toiling as a colporteur among the wild Bedouins of the Eastern desert. We felt ourselves honored in visiting this apostolic man in his school-room on Hermon's side. A flight of stone steps led up to his school, a plain and modest room—bare indeed to Western eyes, consisting of walls and floor, with mats on which master and pupils sit to teach and to be taught. Girls as well as boys attend the school of Abou Aseef, and Druses and Greek Christians alike honor the brave, sincere old soldier of the cross, hidden from the world in this mountain-village, but seen and known of the Master.

From the school-room of Abou Aseef we went to visit a family of converts, by whom we were received with a native courtesy and unaffected kindness that bore witness to the elevating power of the truth. The women, in place of sheepishly hiding themselves, met us frankly and with outstretched hands. They brought us water to drink, adjusted for us rugs, mats and pillows that we might sit or recline with comfort, showing to friends of their friend those attentions for which one would look in a Christian home in America. The dwelling was primitive to rudeness, yet not uncleanly, save as its rafters and rough walls were blackened by smoke. The house was squarely built of stone, and was reached from without by stone steps entering the door in the central archway, on each side of which was an

apartment open to this central way. The larger room, on the right, contained the rude fireplace, whose smoke, as well as heat, found vent in the room. Here we were received and seated. Recesses in the wall hold the bedding during the day; in others are kept the few cooking-utensils which suffice for the needs of these frugal mountaineers. These, with perhaps a chest for valuables, make up the furniture of a house on Hermon. The flat roof is supported by crooked beams, black with smoke; the windows are not glazed, but closed by wooden shutters. To these simple villagers of Hermon such homes are all that is desired; they only ask to be permitted to enjoy them in peace. This, however, they can scarce expect until some better power than that of the Turk dominates Syria and seeks to moderate those bitter feuds between Greek, Maronite, Moslem, Druse and Nusariyeh which make neighbors enemies to be watched, suspected, hated or feared.

Our noonday rest was in a high upland plain, just beneath the snow-fields and beside a running stream, where a valuable water-course was actually being repaired. Here we parted from our missionary friend—he to go to minister to his flocks amid the hills and valleys; we to ride over rugged lava-fields toward Damascus. Passing these black basaltic bands, and coming out into better lands, we rejoiced in the opportunity for the brisk gallop for which our horses were always ready, and before sundown reached our camp at Kefr-Hauwar.

Again we had the company of other parties of pilgrims, including that of the large “personally-con-

ducted" company of tourists, composed of thirty-one American and English travelers, with attendants of every grade and beasts of burden many and various, whom we had met at Bâniâs. The clusters of white tents, the picketed horses and mules, the campfires surrounded by groups of Arabs engaged in endless talk, made a pretty scene in the clear Syrian moonlight, with Hermon's silvered ridge for background. But when, at half-past four the next morning, that hideous invention of the almond-eyed Orientals, the gong, was beaten persistently all through the camp of the large English and American party, and when this torture was followed by the discharge of guns to make sure the awakening of these unfortunates, we turned in our cots with groans of sympathy for the "personally-conducted," and for ourselves, thus robbed of our morning sleep. At five o'clock their tents were pulled down from over their heads, and when we went to our early breakfast, travelers and tents, their horses, mules, donkeys and men, were well on their way to Damascus, where, however, we would arrive before them.

The desirableness of traveling in Palestine with these parties, managed by English firms, is a matter of frequent inquiry. There are those who have tried the experiment, and have been well satisfied. But even they will admit that it was an experiment. For those who earnestly desire to visit the Holy Land, but are unable to form a suitable party, this system furnishes an opportunity; but where a company homogeneous in tastes, aims and sentiments, consisting of four, five or six persons, can be formed, it is far better

to travel independently. On the tourist plan the travelers must obey the dragoman. It is necessary that the leader of the company command. He must be obeyed. He may direct wisely and skillfully, consulting the aims of the party as a whole, but he will often fail to give satisfaction to all. The speed of the party must be that of the feeblest; changes of route and stoppages not provided for in advance are scarcely possible; in case of disagreement the party can be left only at a great sacrifice, if at all. These disadvantages must be weighed against the advantages of the system. In the private party there are difficulties to be met, but in it the dragoman obeys the travelers, who form their own plans, start and stop when and where they please, and are masters in all things. In such journeys to lead is better than to be led; if not better, it is certainly more agreeable.

To-day we are to enter the oldest historic city of the world—Damascus. With such an anticipation we do not sleep late. Across the high and hilly plateau of the Hauran comes a breeze all freshness and purity. The sun shines with a genial warmth. Our horses are eager, and so are their riders. So, on to Damascus whilst the day is yet young!

But the green expanse in which the old city is embedded, so clearly painted to our fancy, is not yet to be seen. Many a mile of dreary desert lies between us and it. Yet the way is not wearisome. It is but a little while, and a clear torrent issues from a ravine of Hermon on our left to sweep by its rocky, pebbly channel to the eastern plain. It is the Arny, a branch of the Awaj, fed by the melting snows of the great mountain-

chief. We ford it, its swift current trying the steadiness of our horses, and with delight we say, "We are crossing the ancient Pharpar, one of those rivers of Damascus of which Naaman made boast." A little to the north another affluent of the Awaj comes down from Hermon through the Wâdy Barbar, which perpetuates the name of the Syrian "Pharpar." The Awaj is lost in a marshy lake that lies thirty miles to the eastward.

We leave the lower hills of the great mountain to enter upon a broad rolling plateau stretching away as far as the eye can reach to a distant line of eastern hills. The plain is yellow, hard and barren, a few harsh and thorny shrubs its only evidence of life. Hermon is left in the west, and Anti-Lebanon takes its place, its higher summits clad in snow, its lower hills frowning in barren desolation on the strip of absolute desert at their feet. The Egyptian ranges that enclose the Nile Valley and the bit of desert at their base are strikingly recalled by these limestone cliffs and the sterile plain from which they rise. And as from the edge of the Libyan Sahara you look away to a band of verdure, called forth at the magic touch of the water of the Nile, so here, from amid the dreary desolation of the desert, there rises before you a green oasis, evoked by the streams that flow from the western mountains. It lies before you, at first a dark island in the sea of sand; on nearer approach, an expanse of vegetation dotted with villages, and with the minarets of Damascus rising amid the dense foliage of its western border.

The Damascus oasis seems to the eye an oval, but

is really a triangle, containing more than two hundred square miles.* It owes its existence entirely to the streams from Hermon and Lebanon, especially the Awaj (or Pharpar), and the Barada, the old Abana. The waters of these rivers are distributed everywhere by canals, and where they go they carry fertility and beauty. When these streams were first led over the plain to beautify and enrich it, and to make it yield sustenance to man, history fails to tell us. But far away, in the days of Abraham, "Damesek" is spoken of as a well-known city. It seems likely that Abraham tarried here on his way from Mesopotamia to Canaan, and "Eliezer of Damascus," afterward his steward, may then have been added to his family. From that day to this it has never ceased to be a populous city. If it be asked how it is that amid the fall of empires and the destruction of great cities—Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Memphis, Thebes—Damascus ever lives, the gurgling waters of the limpid Barada give the reply. This oasis always has been the natural stopping-place for caravans, travelers and armies moving from the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates in the East across the great Arabian steppe to Palestine, to the Mediterranean ports, and to Egypt, in the West and South-west. As we drew toward it we had a token of this fact in meeting a herd of one hundred and forty camels being led from Bagdad on the Tigris to Cairo, the metropolis of Egypt, for sale there. The causes which led armies and tradesmen by this route from Assyria and Babylonia to Egypt three and four thousand years ago are still in force. Damascus

* Two hundred and thirty-six square miles, it is computed.

is the great highway-house between the East and the West. How it will be when the railroad shall displace ancient by modern modes of travel remains to be seen.

At noon we found ourselves at Dareya, one of the villages of the oasis, but five miles from the city, and here we stopped to rest in an olive-orchard. Not unlikely is it that hereabout, as tradition asserts, Saul, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," * armed with credentials from the Jewish Sanhedrim, drew near to Damascus, to be arrested by the hand of God; for the Roman road ran near Dareya. Bright as was the glare of the noonday Syrian sun, it paled before the light that shined out from heaven and struck to the earth the blinded persecutor. The leading of that Jew by the hand into Damascus would attract but little attention among the busy tradesmen and mechanics of eighteen hundred years ago, but how full was it of meaning for every succeeding age! how full of meaning for us! From Damascus he was to go forth to witness for Christ in Asia and to plant churches in Europe. In nearing Damascus one cannot but remember Paul.

The way now invited us to rapid riding, for the road was well defined and the soil hard and gravelly. It was one of the comforts of our company that we were unusually well mounted, so that we could turn aside to see what was noticeable, and make the distances in less time than did others. Not far beyond Dareya we came up with the parties who had preceded us in the early morning, and, after a few min-

* Acts ix. 1.

utes of chat for courtesy's sake, passed them. We had so frequently thus left our fellow-travelers behind that the pride of two Englishmen was aroused, and they determined to show the Yankees what could be done if it so pleased them. Accordingly, as we were walking our horses in leisurely style, the brave Britons made a dash through our party on a full run, but not so rapidly that our two foremost men did not have opportunity to catch the clatter of hoofs, to take in the situation and to give the rein to their willing steeds. Alas for our brave Britons! The Yankee riders shot away from them, leaving them enveloped in a cloud of Syrian dust, to drop back with good-humored chagrin and await the coming of their own company.

"How unbecoming! Pilgrims racing into Damascus!" Pardon us. Human nature is not very different on a Syrian roadway from human nature on a Pennsylvania turnpike. I fear that if the truth were told we took as much satisfaction in outriding our English brethren as in visiting a ruined castle of the era of David. Abdou claimed a treat of green food for the horses on the score of their good deeds, and we freely granted his claim on reaching the city. And, in fact, we were already reaching the ancient city. The green island, rising from the tawny desert no higher than a coral island from the surface of the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean, drew nearer: Its dark mass opened into groves and grain-fields. The gray wall, formed of great blocks of sun-baked mud, which encloses the suburban gardens, became distinguishable from soil and grove, and minarets peered above the foli-

age. We did not enter from the south, but skirted the city-wall to the west until we struck the highway from Beirût, which follows the stream of the Barada into Damascus. A network of rivulets carries the sparkling water of the Barada hither and thither. The gurgling rills make sweet music, and the leafy trees that skirt their banks seem to clap their hands for joy. Over the low wall the silver poplar, the walnut and the fig sway in the breeze; the apricot, the pear and the almond add the fragrance of their white blossoms; while the palm waves an Eastern salute to

WALL OF DAMASCUS.

the travelers from the far West. It seems a fairy transformation to those fresh from the harsh desert amid which this oasis dwells. As we rode into the city suburb beside the beautiful Barada, and found ourselves in the midst of the brilliant coloring and the movement of a gala-day in an Oriental city of a hundred and fifty thousand people, we were as those that dream. Out from rocks and ruins, dilapidated towns and wildernesses and desert, into the gayety of a Damascus fête-day was a startling, a dazzling transition.

Across the stream, on the green common, were groups of soldiers practicing their horses; nearer, the

stream were men and women clad in robes of every color of the rainbow, and in hues more brilliant still; some chatted, others smoked the nargileh; merry-making went gayly on. Footmen and horsemen enlivened our road. Nearer the city a Turkish regimental band added its music, while Turk and Arab and Syrian loiterers went in and out of the cafés which overhang the little river. It was as though we had seated ourselves on the enchanted carpet told of in the *Arabian Nights* in the midst of a desolate desert, closed our eyes, and opened them amid the stir, the gayety, the display of an Oriental city. We were dazed with the suddenness of this transformation-scene. It is no wonder that, to the Arab, Damascus is a paradise, the jewel of the globe, or that it so seemed to Mohammed as he emerged from Arabia.

Before reaching the city-gate Abdou guided us through a narrow door into the garden where our muleteers were already setting up our tents. We were to encamp without, not to abide within, the city-walls.

CHAPTER XXV.

CAFÉS AND BAZAARS OF DAMASCUS.

JUST over against the wall of the garden in which our tents were pitched was a café. Enter it from the roadway and go to its second story, and you will find yourself in a large room with open windows on every side and a gallery overhanging the Barada. It is furnished with chairs and tables, and at your call coffee is served, or lemonade cooled with snow from Hermon. To sit and gaze at the passing people or down on the flowing stream whilst sipping your coffee or lemonade is Eastern bliss. It might seem stupid to the incessantly-active Occidental after the scene had lost its novelty, but to the man of the East to do nothing is blessedness. He does not always refuse the more laborious entertainment of draughts, chess or dominoes, but these are not needful for his entertainment at the café. To listen to the tales of the professional story-teller is a preferable, because a less-fatiguing, exercise. The never-ending "Arabian Nights' Entertainment" is a never-ceasing delight to Arab and Turk. The Damascus gentlemen will loll on a divan, smoke, sip coffee and listen to the doleful chanting of these marvelous tales, accompanied, mayhap, by an

excruciating twanging on the guitar, in a state of mild enjoyment quite wonderful to behold.

Some of the cafés have rooms over the swiftly-flowing Barada, and offer the music of running water to their visitors, who may sit in the moonlight after the heat of the day is passed and drink in the peaceful influences of the night, the stillness and the stream's low voice. Others glitter with hanging lamps and glow with all the brilliancy of Oriental coloring, set off by the gay dresses of the men who recline on the divans and smoke the nargileh or chibouque. But Oriental brilliancy is a brilliancy without taste or harmony. It is a mingling of rich color with shabbiness, of luxury with coarseness. It is picturesque, it fascinates the traveler from the West by its novelty, but it is tawdry, and often mean. "The cafés of Damascus are a passionate poem," cries an enthusiastic writer, but the poems are coarse in fibre and rickety in rhythm. Like all Oriental luxury, they represent a barbaric taste and culture; they may be brilliant—they are not refined, and cannot be elevating.

After our ride from Kefr-Hauwar we greatly enjoyed the comfort of our café, and still more the novel sights visible to us from its windows and its balcony. We played the Damascene with suitable gravity, sipping hot coffee, and lemonade cooled with Hermon's snow (Damascus is not cursed by the grogshop of our own land), whilst looking out upon the sights and catching the sounds of a fête-day in this ancient city. We watched the march of the Turkish infantry, the moving throng of pleasure-seekers across the Barada, the crowding through the mass of the mounted travelers

THE RIVER BARADA (ABANA), WITH DAMASCUS IN THE DISTANCE.

whom we had passed on the way, and the women squatting in groups on the bank of the stream, or walking enveloped in white veils, like ghostly balloons or cotton-bags, formless and shapeless.

When refreshed by rest and the novel sights about us, as the afternoon was but half gone, we started for a walk through the streets and the famed bazaars of the city.

We were just outside of the western gate, the Bâb el-Hadid; the barracks of the Turkish garrison are here, and the palace of the governor. The castle stands on the north of the gate, and is included within its wall. It is large and imposing, with heavy walls, towers and moat, but it is dilapidated within. It would not take a very heavy cannonade to make its stones rattle about the ears of its defenders. Yet it answers its purpose, and is not likely to be bombarded. The weakness of the empire of which it is a part, like its own, is internal; it will fall by disintegration.

Scarcely are we within the city when we plunge into its bazaar, the clustered shops where goods of every sort are sold, and of many sorts are manufactured. Each trade holds a portion of the intricate network of streets which, combined, forms the whole. In one quarter are gathered those who sell shoes; in another, the jewelers; in another, the armorers; and so on with the confectioners, tailors, clothiers, and all the trades called for by the wants or fancies of an Oriental metropolis. The bazaar-streets are narrow, and often so thronged with buyers, wayfarers and loiterers as to seem even more narrow than they are;

they are cool and shady too, as they are roofed over to protect the passers from the rays of the sun. Here, perched on the floor—which is also the counter—of his little shop, a mere open stall, squats the merchant in turban and robe, awaiting trade. If a Moslem, he is dreamy and unconcerned, perhaps smoking; it may be, actually asleep amid his goods. “If it be his fate he will make a sale—if not, not.”* If a Christian, he will exhibit more life. The Moslem, too, can be a sharp salesman when once awakened to business, and can contest a price with all the energy and fury of one engaged in mortal strife. The conflict between the seller with his fancy price and the buyer intent on beating it down is the life of the bazaar. Victory in the struggle is the glory of seller or buyer. The storm of words is loud and furious. The Arab buyer is horror-stricken at the audacity of the merchant who can demand so absurd a price. He frantically refuses

* A little incident coming under my observation in Cairo well illustrates Mohammedan fatalism in its application to all the minutiae of life. When visiting the Tombs of the Caliphs, near that city, we met within one of these chapel-like mausoleums an artist who had crossed the Mediterranean with us, engaged upon a study of one of its precious relics. The brown-faced, wrinkled old custodian stood by him, as he had stood by him all day long. The artist took advantage of our guide as an interpreter to tell the old fellow that his presence was not needed. The reply was a negative shake of the head. “But tell him,” said the painter, “that I will not steal anything. He may lock me in and go away, and let me out at sunset. I don’t like to be watched.” Still the Cerberus of the tomb was unmoved. “Tell him,” was the final and irresistible appeal, “that I will give him a good bakshish if he will go away.” But still the Moslem was unmoved. His only reply was, “If it be the will of God that the howadji give me a big bakshish, the howadji will give it.” So we left our artist under the eye of the turbaned fatalist.

A BARGAIN IN THE BAZAAR.

to listen to such a monster of avarice, and turns from him in disgust. But he is called back and reasoned with; the merits of the saddle for which he is in treaty are extolled, and he is warned not to miss his opportunity. The Arab offers one-third the price. The merchant is horror-struck in his turn, and scoffs at the offer. The contest is long and fierce. At length the Arab's friend plucks him by the sleeve, and bids him depart from such a wretch of a tradesman; and off they go. But they are recalled. "Sit down, my friends," cries the merchant; "let us smoke and consider the matter: you cannot lose such an opportunity;" and they sit down, smoke and wrangle amicably until at last an agreement is reached and the Arab departs with his saddle.

" 'It is naught, it is naught,' saith the buyer;
But when he is gone his way then he boasteth.' *"

So it was in the days of Solomon, and so it is now.

Some stalls you will find deserted even at midday, with a twine net drawn over the front. The tradesman has gone to the mosque for prayers. In these shadowy streets there is not the rattle of wagons, the stamping of hoofs or the crash of the loaded cart. The only clatter is the clatter of tongues or the tap of the hammer in the hands of shoemaker or jeweler or cabinetmaker. In Damascus to walk is the fashion, but for those who would ride the donkey is the street-car, while the soft-footed camel is the cart. The donkey makes his way with gentle patience through the thronged alleys. The camel swings his load of stone

* Prov. xx. 14.

or timber more threateningly, whilst his leader warns the people with cries of "Dahrak! dahrak!" (your back! your back!), and they crouch to let him pass. More rarely some high functionary rides through the packed way on his mettlesome horse, much as you might ride down the aisle of a well-filled church at the moment of dismissal. Yet, strange to say, no one seems to be hurt. Dodging is reduced to a fine art in Damascus.

Many of the bazaars awaken a lively interest in the traveler from the West. The gold- and silver-smiths, with their tiny furnaces and rude tools, turn out trinkets of delicacy, yet not to be compared in elegance or taste with those of Europe and America. The brassworkers and coppersmiths are more noisy, and offer great trays finely embossed and other specimens of their skill curious in the eyes of visitors. The silk bazaar is of special interest, for here we see the product of a purely native industry. Silkworms are bred widely in Syria, and all the steps of the manufacture are carried forward to the production of the heavy and brilliantly-colored fabrics with which the Damascus market is stocked.

The shoemakers too attract the eye, with their stores of red and yellow slippers, stiff and pointed at the toe, and the manufacturers of "kob-kobs," the wooden clogs on which the ladies walk lifted two inches above the mud or dirt of the streets. These kob-kobs are often highly ornamented with inlaying of mother-of-pearl in a characteristically Syrian style. But French shoes also are now sold in Damascus, and the making of this style of shoes, so superior to

those of the country, has become one of the most lively trades of the bazaar.

But we must not attempt to give even a hint of the novel shapes taken by the various branches of traffic—the baker with his thin loaves; the confectioners with viands strange to Western eyes; the sellers of pipes with nargîlehs (the water-pipe or “hubble-bubble”) of costly workmanship, or cheaper affairs made of the shell of the cocoanut. But the spot that most attracts visitors is the Sûk el-Arwâm, where curiosities and antiquities of every kind are sold. Here is to be found old Abu Antika, “father of antiquities,” whose swords and daggers, pipes and scarfs, are beyond all price, yet graciously sold for a trifle (only four times their value) to his beloved customers from distant lands—purely from love to them. Damascus blades are shown that can be made to meet around the seller’s waist, antique helmets and shields, curiously-wrought girdles, carved brazen vessels and jeweled pipes. Here too are sabres and daggers with embossed hilts and blades—none of them less than five hundred years old, you are assured, but which experts will tell you are recent importations from Germany. The articles here offered are captivating to the stranger, but he will do well to pause before he loads himself with useless valuables even though found in an Oriental bazaar.

Just how many thousands of dogs there are in Damascus I will not venture to say. Where no census is taken of men, it were too much to expect a census of dogs—whether “Christian dogs” or the true four-legged creature. But to pass unmentioned so

large a part of the population of the city would be inexcusable. At every step you come upon them, yellow or dark-gray beasts, wolfish in form, surly in temper, lying in the street-way, sleeping with no dread of harm. No wheeled vehicles curtail their privileges, and donkey and camel step over them with a wonderfully tender respect for their limbs. You would expect the men thronging the street to drive them off with blow or kick, but they do not. Though masterless and ownerless, the dogs have certain recognized rights, the most noticeable of which is the right to occupy the very middle of the street-way when it is most thronged with people. Their services as scavengers are rewarded by this immunity at least. Though not fed regularly, they still, as in the days of Christ, eat the crumbs that fall from the tables of the citizens. I noticed three earnestly-expectant dogs seated in front of a Damascene tradesman who was taking his meal, and saw that they were rewarded with what was left after he was satisfied.

That dogs were little respected of old in Damascus is shown by the reply made to Elisha when that prophet was visited here by Hazael, prime minister of Benhadad, king of Syria. When the reckless officer was told of the miseries and wrongs he would inflict upon the people of Israel, he exclaimed, in real or affected horror, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?"* And so would a modern Syrian use the poor dog as the simile of all that is

* If we translate the words of Hazael, "What is then thy servant, the dog, that he should do this great thing?" as may be better, the effect is the same as to the estimate put upon the dog.

vile. The estimate of the dog is as unchanged in the East as many another thing of more importance.

The bazaars of Damascus make a profound impression upon the traveler, especially if he come hither fresh from the Western world. All is wonderfully new and striking, even whilst recalling what has been read in Oriental story, as though it had often been seen before. To one familiar with the bazaars of India and Egypt they cannot be so startling or impressive. They are less crowded with masses of human life than those of Calcutta and Madras; less brilliantly picturesque than those of Cairo; less barbaric than those of Osiout and Assouan. Yet to every one they are full of lively interest, enriching the memory with many never-to-be-forgotten pictures.

In our wanderings through the bazaars we were seen and saluted by a Frank who recognized us as strangers, and in whom we were happy to find the excellent missionary of the Irish Presbyterian Church (though himself an American), the Rev. James Crawford. Now, the wise traveler makes it a point to hold on to a missionary when he can lay hold upon him. No men are so intelligent in all that concerns the people as the Protestant missionaries, nor are any men more respectfully treated by the people. The missionary can secure for you access to persons and places, and can explain to you what you see, as none others can. In hospitality they abound, even beyond their means. Sometimes their courtesy is presumed upon unduly, yet still they greet their countrymen with frank kindness, and put at their disposal the information secured by years of residence amid a strange people.

The afternoon was drawing to a close, and in the shaded bazaars the tradesmen were beginning to shut up their little shops, but in the outer world it was still broad daylight, so that our missionary friend could guide us to the Great Mosque, which is the pride of Damascus. First a heathen temple, next a Christian church, now a Moslem mosque, its architecture speaks of three eras and three religions. But, in an ancient inscription, which has strangely been spared by Mohammedan fanaticism, we read a prophecy of its future return to the worship of the true God. From the silversmiths' bazaar, we ascended by a stair-

way to its roof,
which is overhung
by the southern
wall of the mosque.

In the transept,
against which the
bazaar-shops are
built, the upper
part of a triple
gateway faces you
as you stand on

THE GREAT MOSQUE OF DAMASCUS.

the roof. Over the
central arch is a

cross, and on the lintel, clearly cut in the marble, is the inscription in Greek :

"THY KINGDOM, O CHRIST, IS AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM,
AND THY DOMINION ENDURETH THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS." *

* The quotation is from the one hundred and forty-fifth Psalm (verse 13), with the insertion of the name of Christ.

So remarkable is it that this prophecy should abide through twelve hundred years of possession by the Moslem that we may well accept it as an omen of that which we believe aside from the omen—that the worship of the true God in Jesus Christ shall again resound within the walls of this temple and in the regions round about, as it did long centuries ago. It is noticeable, too, that of the three minarets of the Great Mosque one is the “Madinet Isa,” the “Minaret of Jesus.” It is held by the followers of the Arabian Prophet that when Jesus shall come to judge the world he will alight upon this minaret.

But the sun was setting, and we returned to our tents without the gate. Here a good dinner awaited us, not unwelcome at the close of so full a day. In the evening the croaking of the multitudinous frogs that dwell beside the many streamlets made soothing music for us as we rested or read or wrote. At a later hour we were startled by the rumble of carriage-wheels, a sound not heard before by us in all Palestine, though once no strange thing in Syria, whose kings rode in chariots and used chariots in war. It was the “diligence,” the French stage-coach, arriving from Beirût. A good road, built by the French after the massacre of the Christians in 1860, now connects Damascus with the sea-coast at Beirût, and brings the fanatical city within easier reach of the great powers of Europe. The diligence soon passed, permitting the music of the frogs again to soothe us until we slept sweetly under our canvas roofs beside the Barada.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A SABBATH IN DAMASCUS.

BRIGHT, sunny and warm broke the first day of the week on Damascus. The birds were singing in the trees, while the waters murmured below. We awoke, and arose with the delightful consciousness that we were not to mount and march. Our Creator understood the needs of his creatures when he gave them the weekly day of rest. It came as a balmy blessing to us here in Damascus. Our morning worship seemed sweeter and prayer more real because it was the Sabbath day. To start off on foot for a forty-five minutes' walk to church—an English service in a Protestant Christian church—brought us delightfully back to old associations, even though our walk was through the streets of this Oriental city, where all was strange and the day is little noted. At the Presbyterian mission-church a small congregation of travelers gathered for worship and to be stimulated by the straightforward and earnest words of our companion, Dr. Logan. The chapel is especially designed for missionary services in Arabic, but during the season of travel an English service is maintained for the benefit of those who may be spending the Sabbath in Damascus.

It was a pleasing part of our journey to be thus brought in contact with the American missionary and his family in their work and home. No one could fail to be impressed by the unconscious self-denial of those who have left home, kindred, and all that is meant by "a Christian land," to dwell in social solitude amid Moslems—those to whom the name of Christian and of Protestant is an abomination. Yet, far from complaining or wearing faces of conscious self-sacrifice, they are unaffectedly happy and cheerful. They love their work, and cling to it from the love of Christ and immortal men. The *direct* influence of this Damascus mission on the Mohammedans is less apparent than that upon the members of the decayed and corrupt churches of the East, and especially upon those in the communion of the Greek Church. By personal intercourse, by schools and by the printed page the mission is leavening these old churches with the gospel influences which the West may well return to the East and to the land from which those influences came westward to Europe and America.

There is one influence, however, which is telling upon those about the missionaries who may not listen to their preaching or read their books—the influence of personal character. This is felt in Damascus not merely, but in the villages of Lebanon and Hermon. It is well understood that the Protestant missionary is one to be believed and trusted implicitly. In Kefr-Hauwar a Protestant congregation had grown up beside the old Greek church. It so happened that both communities gathered up their tax-money and sent it at the same time to Damascus for payment to the

Turkish collector. On reaching the city, they found that the tax was not payable at that time, and would not be received. They knew not what to do. The money was largely in heavy copper and other base coins, not easily carried or guarded. A happy thought occurred to the Protestant commissioners: "We will leave the money with our missionary father."—"And do you think he would be willing to take our money too?" asked their fellow-villagers.—"We can't say; come and try," was the rejoinder; and together they came to Mr. Crawford's house. The Protestants handed their bag to the missionary, who marked it and laid it in his safe. The Greeks looked on wistfully, and then humbly petitioned that their money also might be left in his keeping. "But why do you not go to your own patriarch?" he asked.—"Ah," was the reply, "we might leave it, but how do we know that we would get it again?"—"What!" exclaimed the missionary; "you can trust your souls with your patriarch, and can you not trust your money with him?" The illogical, unpolished villagers shrugged their shoulders and made no answer to this close question, only begging to be allowed to put their money, without any receipt or voucher, into the safe of the missionary until they should call for it.

It affords food for reflection to note that this is not an isolated fact, but that the bearing of our missionaries all through this land is such as to secure for them the confidence of both rulers and people—of Turk, Greek, Latin, Druse and Maronite—even when the doctrines which they preach are bitterly hated. In the horrible massacres which made Syria a butcher's

shamble in 1860, amid the burning of villages and plundering of homes, the fight, the defeat, the slaughter, all turned with trust to the foreigners who had come to bring them the gospel, and whose lives reflected the gospel. In the deadly conflict between the Druses and Maronites of Lebanon, when the Maronites fled from Abeih, where the late beloved Dr. Calhoun was stationed, they cast down their valuables—their money, jewels and silks—in his court for safe-keeping. The war raged around this house, but it was untouched by the savage Druse beys and sheikhs; for its sake the whole village was spared. When the tide turned and English men-of-war and French troops brought the Maronites back to their homes eager for vengeance, the Druses fled beyond the Jordan. But before leaving their mountains they, in turn, brought their money and jewels to be stored in the house of Dr. Calhoun, the man whom all could trust.*

The Damascus Moslems are notorious for the bitterness of their fanaticism. Until recent times they would scarcely endure the presence of foreign Christians, whilst the native Christians were treated with contempt and oppression. In an outburst of fanatical fury in 1860 the Christian quarter of the city was burned and destroyed, and great numbers of the Christians slaughtered, literally butchered. In a Franciscan convent, whither nearly a thousand people had flocked for refuge, every soul was put to the sword. For three days burning, robbery and murder reigned in the Christian quarter. Fathers and brothers were stabbed

* See Dr. H. H. Jessup's *Mohammedan Missionary Problem* for other like incidents.

and cut down, women were carried into slavery, children were left orphans. A Christian population estimated at thirty-two thousand was reduced to nineteen thousand. Whilst this horrible tragedy was being enacted the Turkish officials looked coldly on, too much in sympathy with the cut-throats of Damascus to check the slaughter of Christian dogs. It is some satisfaction to know that under the pressure of the indignation of all Christendom and of the threats of the great European powers, together with the landing of a French corps of six thousand men, a number of the leaders of the massacre were arrested, convicted and hanged in the streets, and Ahmed Pasha, the governor, was publicly executed on the parade-ground beside the Barada.

The fears of the Christians have gradually subsided, yet there is the uneasy consciousness that they dwell beside a sleeping volcano. It may never again burst into a horrible activity; and then again it may. However, the Christian population is once more increasing in numbers and in wealth. It is to be hoped that these causes may not awaken anew the fanatic jealousy of the Mohammedans, and also that the Greek and Latin and Syrian Christians may be touched of God with a longing for that perfect rest which can only be attained by an acceptance of the truth. The mission-work is scattering the good seed; let us pray that it may be blessed of God.

The day proved warm, even hot, with a southerly wind, so that water cooled with snow from Hermon was a welcome luxury at our noonday meal. We

tasted also “of the fruits of the land”—pomegranates, pears and preserved apricots, with *raha*, the Turkish paste—and then enjoyed the luxury of rest in our tents, with the study of the place which Damascus holds in the Bible.

We find Damascus far back in sacred history. The steward of Abraham’s house, nineteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, was “Eliezer of Damascus.” In the days of the judges and kings, this part of Syria was known as “Aram-Damesek,” or “Syria of Damascus,” showing that even then, as Isaiah says, “The head of Syria is Damascus.” * It was taken by David and garrisoned, and during the times of the kings, in peace or in war, the history of Syria was constantly mingled with that of Israel, but oftener in war than peace. Here every one recalls the story of the “little maid” of Israel who was carried into captivity and became the servant of the wife of Naaman, the Syrian commander—how she said, “Would God, my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy;” and how the hint fell on willing ears, so that Naaman with his retinue went to Elisha, but only to receive the unwelcome command to wash in Jordan and be clean. Here, encamped beside the cool and glittering Abana, and fresh from the arrowy Pharpar, we could not but sympathize with the proud exclamation of the Syrian general, “Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?” †

Elisha visited Damascus at a later day, and proph-

* Isa. vii. 8.

† 2 Kings v.

esied the treason of Hazael to his king, Benhadad. Hazael grew strong, and in alliance with the king of Israel invaded Judah. Ahaz turned for help to the king of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser, who took Damascus, put its king to death, and carried its people into captivity, thus fulfilling the prophecies of Isaiah and of Amos :

“ Thus saith the Lord ;
For three transgressions of Damascus and for four,
I will not turn away the punishment thereof ;
Because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of
iron :
But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael,
Which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad.
I will break also the bar of Damascus,
And the people of Syria shall go into captivity into Kir,
Saith the Lord.” *

This occurred about seven hundred and forty years before the birth of Christ. A hundred years later Jeremiah wrote of the fulfilled prophecy :

“ Damascus is waxed feeble, and turneth herself to flee ;
Fear hath seized upon her.
How is the city of praise not left ;
The city of my joy !” †

After its capture and subjugation by Assyria, Damascus must still have been a commercial city of importance. Its situation on the highway between the East and the West, making it the natural mart of the caravan-trade, forbade its becoming a deserted place. Accordingly, we find Ezekiel, in his prophecy of the destruction of Tyre, saying, “ Damascus was thy merchant, in the multitude of the wares of thy

* Amos i. 3-5.

† Jer. xlix. 24, 25.

making."* Though under the sway of the Assyrians, it yet retained its trade, as it did under succeeding dynasties. On reaching New-Testament times we find Damascus a city still. Under the Macedonians, Armenians, Arabians, Romans, it had maintained its position and its importance. Hither came the fiery Saul of Tarsus, bent on the extermination of the Christian heresy which had infected the Jewish community of the city. The story of his arrest by the voice of that Jesus whom he persecuted, of his humiliated entry into the city, blind and led by the hand, of the visit of Ananias, of his receiving Christian baptism, and of his zealous preaching of that Jesus whom he had persecuted,—need not be rehearsed. It adds lustre to Damascus that it was the scene of events so pregnant with high influences upon the history of Christianity, and so upon the history of Europe, of America and of the world. Subsequently, under the Byzantine empire, and still more under the Moslem caliphs, Damascus was a brilliant city, and such it is still.

An evening walk beside the Barada under the silvery light of the moon afforded a fitting close to this restful day. The smooth road stretched in a white band away to the foot of Lebanon; fleecy clouds floated in the sky; the silver leaves of the poplars rustled softly in the breeze, while the minarets of mosques rising amid them added a flavor purely Oriental to the charms of the night.

Turning again toward the city, we found groups of men in the open air, smoking and chatting. Others

* Ezek. xxvii. 18.

were gathered in the cafés, seated on the divans, enjoying refreshments or soothing themselves with the bubbling nargileh. Some wore the Arab turban, others the Turkish fez, whilst robes of every hue gave a vi-

DAMASCENE GENTLEMAN.

vacuity of coloring in broad contrast with the black uniformity of Western men in masses. One gentleman, in a long outer robe of pink satin trimmed with fur and a gay inner dress, was particularly noticeable, though his brilliancy seemed not at all excessive to his Damascene associates.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ON DONKEYS IN DAMASCUS.

MONDAY was given up to the continued study of this city. Mounted on donkeys, with lofty saddles and stirrups so short that our knees almost reached our chins, we rode in state through the streets and bazaars. In the streets on which stand the residences even of the rich and great no grand portals attract your notice; not one pretty front or neat doorway relieves the eye as it traverses the long extent of monotonous, ash-colored walls which rise immediately from the footway. In the upper stories projecting latticed windows sometimes open on the street, with curiously-wrought woodwork to screen those within from the gaze of those without. But many houses have not even this variation from the blank, dead surface of the gray wall. You look in vain for the edifices which give splendor to Western cities—the courts of justice, the banks and post-offices, the museums, the academies, and even the jails. Aside from the mosques, there is no building to attract attention. Yet there are brilliant exceptions, when the house-walls are tastefully embellished with broad perpendicular stripes of red, yellow and blue.

The houses are entered by narrow and low doors, bespeaking suspicion and danger. Once within, however, if it be the home of wealth, the dullness of the outside gives place to a variety and novelty strikingly pleasing.

The Hôtel Dimitri, ordinarily the first Damascus house entered by travelers, gives a fair idea of the houses of the rich. By a low and narrow doorway you pass from the street into a covered vestibule which opens into the central court, about which the house is built, and which forms so pleasing a feature of the Syrian home. It is paved with marble, and has in its centre a raised marble basin into which water flows from a fountain—not a jet (as the pictures make it), but a flowing tap. A few trees grow in the court—lemon, orange, apricot or pomegranate—and vines often climb on trellises to the upper story. All the rooms of the first floor open upon this court. One of these, the *lewân*, is a simple but spacious recess with comfortable divans around its walls. Here guests are received, and here the family gather in the cool of the day for social intercourse. The second story is reached by a stairway from the court to a gallery with balustrade, into which the chambers open. Thus everything looks inward in the Damascus house, not outward as with us. This tells the story of the family life; it is a life by itself, to a great degree cut off from the outer world. Sons bring their wives to the father's house, where the grandmother rules her children's children. The young bride comes in, not to be the petted one of the household, but its servant and drudge; if Moslem, to be subject to the tyranny

of the mother in-law, and, if he be so inclined, to the rod of the husband. Her world must be within the walls of her husband's abode.

Some of the homes of the wealthy of Damascus are most costly and ornate in their decorations. Fine marbles, precious stones, paintings and wood-carvings add to the brilliancy of the court and *lewân*, whilst the ladies match the decorations of the rooms with all possible display of jewelry and costly robes. Yet, with much that is really elegant, there is also much that is pretentious only, defective in taste and in the evidences of cultivation. It is the fruit of a but half-civilized, half-barbarous moral and æsthetic culture.

COURT OF A HOUSE IN DAMASCUS.

The roofs of the houses are flat and made of hard-pounded clay or of cement. They are reached by a stairway from within, and form a pleasant resort for

rest, refreshment or privacy. In the better houses a balustrade surrounds the roofs, a needed protection if they are used as sleeping-places; but in most of the houses the balustrade is lacking. The roof has always been a favorite resort in Syrian homes. Far back, in the days of Joshua, we read that Rahab hid the spies

sent out by the Israelites on the roof of her house, covering them with the flax which she was drying there.*

David at eventide "walked upon the roof of the king's house," and, as his house was more lofty than those about it, looking over into the court

PRAYER ON THE ROOFTOP.

of his neighbor's house (a gross violation of Eastern rules of decorum), he was tempted by Bathsheba's beauty.†

It was on the housetop that Samuel held private conversation with the youthful Saul, who had been marked out as the man to be the first king of Israel.‡ When a tumult occurs in the town, or some sudden outcry excites the apprehensions of the people, they rush to the roof, whence they can look down into the street or along its course to learn what evil may be impending. Isaiah asked (chap. xxii. 1), in his day:

* Josh. ii. 6.

† 2 Sam. xi. 2.

‡ 1 Sam ix. 25.

“What aileth thee now that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops,
Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city?”

and so now might the same question be asked should there be an outbreak in Damascus. The roof answers also for a place of prayer, as it did when Peter retired to the roof of the house of Simon the Tanner at Joppa for his noonday devotions.* At the hour of the muezzin's cry the Moslem of to-day spreads his carpet on the housetop, turns his face toward Mecca and performs his task of morning or evening prayer.

But the pride of Damascus is the water of the never-failing Barada, which flows through all its quarters and into all its homes. How great a blessing this is in this Syrian land it is hard for the untraveled Occidental, accustomed to an unstinted supply of water and to a thousand home-luxuries besides, to understand. But after learning by travel how precious is this gift he rejoices in the bounteous supply of Damascus. The words of the Psalmist, “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God,”† come to him with a force not before apprehended. The Barada makes Damascus glad.

Passing through the streets, with their blank walls and rude pavement, we reached the residence of Dr. Meshaka, the American vice-consul, to whom we desired to pay our respects. His spacious house is built on the usual Damascene plan. We were received at the gateway by a servant, and led through the vestibule into the paved court, and then to the *lewân*, whilst our cards were carried to the consul. We were courteously welcomed, and conducted to an apart-

* Acts x. 9.

† Ps. xlv. 4.

ment, one-half of which was raised about two feet above the floor. We were handed to this raised dais* by our host, and seated upon comfortable divans. The first courtesies extended us were the ordering of coffee, in the small cups here used, and the invitation to smoke—an invitation which those who chose were permitted to decline without offence. Our intelligent host then entertained us with agreeable and instructive conversation. He speaks English well, having received his literary and medical education in the American-Syrian College at Beirût. His comely wife was also presented to us, and conversed with us freely, for they are not only Christians, but Protestants. The children too, fat and chubby, were brought in to kiss our hands.

After a suitable exchange of courtesies we asked to be introduced to the consul's venerable father. It was a privilege to greet this patriarchal man, so learned, brave and earnest for God's truth, and so well known wherever the Arabic tongue is read, by his controversial writings in defence of the true Church against the unscriptural claims of Rome. Though partially paralyzed five years before, and now over eighty years of age, his mind was clear, and he turned from the Arabic Bible, which he was studying, to engage with interest in conversation (through an interpreter) with his visitors from the far-off West. His life has been an eventful one. After the labors and dangers of his earlier years were passed, he narrowly escaped death in the massacre of the Christians in 1860. Whilst he was seated in his house the murderous mob attacked the

* The "uppermost rooms" of Matt. xxiii. 6.

door, struck down the janitor and rushed upon him to despatch him. He received a blow on the head from a hatchet, but escaped by a back door into the street. With great presence of mind he threw a handful of money on the pavement and fled; and when again his pursuers were close upon him, again threw out his money, and so gained time to reach the house of the chief of police, whose protection he claimed. The chief placed him in a secure room and locked him in. As time passed on Meshaka saw that he had claimed the protection of the wolf by entering his den. The officer was in sympathy with the bloodthirsty Mo-

DR. MESHAKA OF DAMASCUS.

hammedan populace. Abd el-Kâder, the Algerine prince, now living in honorable and honored exile in Damascus, loved Meshaka, and hearing of the murderous deeds of his co-religionists, determined to save his Christian friend. Despatching several of his trusty

Algerines to the house of Meshaka, he bade them bring the old man safely to him as they valued their lives. They went and returned, reporting that no trace of the learned man could be found. They were sent again, and tracked him to the police-officer's house. But they were assured that he was not there. Abd el-Kâder understood the men with whom he was dealing, and sent his Algerines back to the officer with a command that they should not return without Meshaka. Meshaka's cell-door was unlocked. Hearing footsteps approach, he expected instant death, but he was led forth and delivered to the Algerines, who surrounded him with drawn swords and led him to their chief, by whom his life was saved, as were the lives of many others. All honor to this chivalrous and noble Algerian, Abd el-Kâder!

Leaving the excellent Meshakas, we turned our donkeys to the bazaar once more. So varied and so striking are the sights and sounds of this hive of Oriental trade and labor that it may be visited and studied again and again with lively pleasure. We wandered through many departments of this labyrinth of shops, gazing right and left, stopping to note what was of special interest and to make purchases of articles easily carried. The encroachment of Western-made goods was very observable. In some of the shops were muslins, calicoes and other goods of English manufacture, designed especially for Syrian markets, with gaudy hues and patterns fitted to attract purchasers in this land of brilliant colors. Machine-made iron-ware from Europe is also underbidding the hand-wrought implements of native production. Yet an air

of romance gathers about even these prosaic articles when displayed in a Damascene bazaar and sold by the turbaned Moslem who squats amid them.

Thoroughly Eastern, however, is the scribe, with ink-horn at his feet, writing a letter for the unlearned

EASTERN WATER-SELLER.

man who dictates to him the words he would send to his distant friend; and the itinerant water-seller with

water-jar; or the walking dispenser of lemonade, with a lump of snow from Hermon attached to his bottle wherewith to cool his acid refreshment, rattling his cups and calling for customers with the cry of "Allay the heat!" "Refresh thy heart!" Here, too, is the vender of sliced pickled beets and brilliantly-colored turnips; and then the knife-grinder, like his Western brother, bearing his wheel on his back. In one shop

the barber is at his work, shaving not the beard, but the top of the head (as Joseph was shaved, doubtless, before he went into the presence of Pharaoh); in another, little bits of mutton, broiled on spits, invite the taste of those passing by. Everything is interesting to the traveler.

ORIENTAL BARBER

We could not fail to note the children, so pretty are they, with oval faces, rosy cheeks and great round black eyes. Gazing on their attractive countenances, the question came to me: "Is it possible that these lovely children should grow up with hearts of hate, and ripen into men ready to cut their Christian neighbors' throats?" May it never be! May the gospel of God's love possess this land and rule in the hearts of its people!

Whilst the bazaar shows you the retail business of Damascus, you must visit the khâns to know how larger mercantile operations are transacted. Of these

khâns there are many, firmly built of stone, and promising to stand, as they have stood, for many generations of buyers and sellers. To enter the khân you pass from the street, by a handsome gateway of Saracenic architecture with wrought-iron doors, into a large quadrangular building, facing inward upon a central court. In this court is a fountain, flowing into a basin about which kneel the camels whose loads are being transferred to the warehouses which open into the court—it may be bales of Persian carpets, or sacks of Arabian coffee or packages of silk goods. Boxes, bales and sacks stand in piles before the doors of the rooms on this ground floor, and on them loll the subordinates of the business-firms. A stairway conducts you to the gallery of the second floor, which runs entirely around the court. On this the doors of the counting-rooms of the merchants open. Above are little rooms with grated windows in which tradesmen from abroad may lodge. The khân bears little resemblance to the marts with which the Western man is familiar at home, and is wonderfully lacking in anything that approaches to their driving ways. Yet, in their own slow way, the merchants of Damascus transact their business as well, and, it may be, eat as well, digest as well and sleep as well, as the more energetic tradesmen of Liverpool, New York and San Francisco.

Abdou had been our guide through the city thus far, but now he called to his assistance an odd, dried-up, little old man in turban and red-and-white-striped robe, who piloted us to the house of the Crawfords, where we were to lunch. How pleasant and home-like it was! The American father and mother and

children; the absence of any affectation of self-sacrifice amid much self-sacrifice; the gentleness and truthfulness and earnestness of the atmosphere; even the bread and the tea,—were full of associations with far-away America and with the Christianity that makes it what it is, and that is yet to infuse into Syrian society the same blessed elements.

THE STREET CALLED STRAIGHT, DAMASCUS.

Our visit over, we set off, with Mr. Crawford as our leader, for an afternoon ride in the city and suburbs.

“Are there any localities,” it may be asked, “that link the buildings of the present Damascus with those of the past—with the Damascus of Paul and Ananias, or of Benhadad?” If the question be put to a local guide, he will answer you in the affirmative. He will show you the scene of the conversion of Paul, the house in which Ananias lived, the place in the wall where the great convert was let down in a basket, and the tomb of St. George, who aided in his escape. But, though we cannot venture to draw upon the credulity of our readers so far as to introduce them to these places, we can assure them that the “street called Straight” may be walked through or ridden through, as they may prefer, without a doubt. It is but a poor street now—at least to Western eyes—yet it runs almost in a straight line for a mile from the East Gate of the city westward. This street has kept its place from age to age, unchanged in its course, though changed in the structures that line it. In the days of Paul it was a broad and noble thoroughfare, with a double colonnade of Corinthian pillars dividing it into three avenues. Like Jerusalem, Damascus has often been overthrown, so that the present city and streets stand upon the rubbish of those that preceded them; but when this is cleared away the bases of the columns of the colonnades are found, telling the story of the magnificence of “the street called Straight” in the olden time.

And now, having reached the terminus of the street, we will go out at the East Gate. But no gate opens for us directly from the street. We must turn to the left, pass under a Saracenic tower and come out at

right angles to the wall which closes the end of the street. Turning and looking back, we find that a triple portal opened the way to the grand avenue. It is of Roman construction, with one central and two side arches. The central and southern portals

are built up, and it is through the northern side-portal that we have emerged from the city.

Now we pass northward around Damascus, without the wall. Houses upon the wall, with windows opening outward, are plentiful. If no one of

EAST GATE OF DAMASCUS.

them is the very window from which Paul was let down, they well illustrate not only the possibility, but the naturalness, of this way of escape from enemies within the city-walls. Reaching the north-eastern angle of the city, we turn westward, and then, leaving the wall, north-westward through the suburb of Salahiyeh, with its many tombs and mosques, to the hills that overlook Damascus and its plain. The glorious streams of water that leap down by the roadsides to enter and refresh the city charm you, but the hills from which they come rise before you sterile and desolate as the Libyan range that frowns on green Egypt. And as the traveler climbs those Libyan cliffs to gaze upon

VIEW OF DAMASCUS FROM THE WEST, AND ABOVE SALAHIYEH.

1901

the fertility of the plain watered by the Nile, so here he turns from the cliffs of Anti-Lebanon to feast his eyes upon Damascus, embedded in the verdure of its oasis watered by the Barada. The story runs that Mohammed, whilst yet a camel-driver from Mecca, standing upon these heights above Salahiyeh, after gazing upon the scene, so enchanting to an inhabitant of a desert, turned away without entering the city or sitting beneath the shadow of its groves, with the exclamation, "Man can have but one Paradise, and mine is fixed above!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FROM DAMASCUS TO BA'ALBEK.

THE day for leaving Damascus had come, and with it came a change of weather as sudden and sharp as those groaned over by Americans in their eminently changeable climate. With the wind blowing steadily from the south-east—the “sirocco” of Syria—there was heat and languor; but now, with fresh westerly breezes sweeping over the snowy summits and down the sides of Hermon and Lebanon, the atmosphere was clear and cold. Woolens, and even overcoats, yesterday laid aside as burdens, were welcome. So much the better for the travelers!

But before leaving the “Eye of the East” we had time for another stroll through its ever-interesting streets and bazaars. The horse-bazaar, an open space surrounded by shops for the sale of horseshoes, nails and files, of harness and saddlery, of charcoal and of horse-feed, proved very attractive, showing, as it did, so much of Eastern life. Small boys led donkeys overshadowed by great loads of green grass and young grain; camels bore building-stone and bales of merchandise, whilst, in striking contrast, little girls led pet lambs by pink ribbons; Turkish officers on

handsome horses; street-cleaners with donkeys rigged with panniers to hold the sweepings; Moslem priests on mules; Bedouins barefooted and Beirût Syrians in patent-leather shoes; women with children astride of the shoulder or hip; peddlers with trays of cakes; the hirers of pipes, the sellers of hot coffee; the loungers and loafers; robes Oriental and Occidental; heads adorned with turban, with fez, with hat,—combined in a picturesque medley presented by few spots in the world. The scene was most commonplace and unnoticeable to the dogs asleep in the street and to the Orientals who lent coloring to the picture, but to us it was full of attraction. Yet we bade it farewell, went out by the city-gate, passed the Turkish garrison marching in with a full band, and, mounting our horses, turned our faces to Anti-Lebanon and Ba'albek.

Our way out was westward, and then northward through the ravine down which the Barada leaps and laughs, rejoicing in its mission of turning a desert into a garden. Nothing could be more charming. For the first three miles we followed the Beirût road, with the stream at our side embowered in the groves which it nourishes and making grateful music in its rush over rocks and through the smoother reaches of its course. Reaching Dammar, we struck off to the right to climb and cross the first range of the Anti-Lebanon mountains. The change in scenery was sudden and striking. Verdure disappeared. All was desolation. Barren crags, chalky, flinty upland plains and dreary limestone ledges alone were seen. Descending once more, we came again upon the stream, dashing down a gorge

and sweeping through a narrow valley, which it clothed with living green, groves of walnut and of tall white poplar, gardens and orchards of cherry and apricot, contrasting sharply with the desolation of the unwatered mountains all around.

And now let us stop our horses for a moment and turn to the first Psalm:

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor standeth in the way of sinners,
Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in his law doth he meditate day and night.
And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,
That bringeth forth his fruit in his season;
His leaf also shall not wither,
And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

What a telling commentary upon these verses is furnished by the course of the Barada! Note the “tree planted by the rivers of water.” See its luxuriant greenness and its fruitfulness! Sterility is all around, but it blooms and bears. Its roots draw life from the stream, as the Christian is nourished by the word of God and made fruitful unto good works by communion, through it, with the Father of all, the Living God. The expression “rivers of water” undoubtedly refers to the streamlets diverted from the main stream and made to flow to the roots of trees *planted* where they can be thus reached by water. So does the Barada carry life, far beyond its banks, all over the plain below. Happy the Christian who, whether near the sanctuary or far from it amid unbelieving multitudes, yet day by day draws life and health

and vigor of soul from the Living Water, the Water of Life!

This lesson is one that often comes to us in these irrigating lands; it will come to us again; so let us resume our journey, following the glen of the Barada up to its sources. The limestone cliffs, upheaved and distorted, tower eight hundred and a thousand, or even two thousand, feet above the stream. In places they crowd the valley into a line of green bordering the little river; again they recede and leave room for fields and orchards on one side or on both sides, amid which hamlet or village gives homes to those who tend the water-courses and till the soil. Thus we follow the mountain-stream upward until we reach Ain Fijeh, where, amid scenery matching that of Alps or Apennines in romantic boldness, a fountain bursts from beneath the rocks, an impetuous river at its birth. As the river Aveyron gushes from the icy cliffs of the Mer de Glace in the Vale of Chamounix, so does this fountain, chief source of the Barada, leap out from a seam in the rocky strata of Anti-Lebanon, at once a glorious stream thirty feet in width and five feet in depth. Towering precipices frown a thousand feet above; green woods rustle below; the stream dances and roars; ruined buildings and an old shrine of the water-nymph overhang the fountain. Could pilgrims ask for a more charming spot in which to tarry for an hour of noontide rest?

Refreshed, we quit the sheltered vale to move on up the mountain-pass. A startled fox that has been foraging in the vale dashes up the hill, and, when well out of range, turns and looks upon us with characteris-

tic coolness. Syrian foxes are not behind their brethren of other lands in shrewdness.* As we ascend and cross the bleak ridges the keen, chilly west wind makes us button close our coats. A dash of cold

rain pelts upon us. But on we ride, paying little heed to cold wind or dash of mountain-rain. Travel has well seasoned us, and the charm of penetrating regions all unknown makes full amends for slight discomforts. Yet, after all, we were

SYRIAN FOX.

not sorry to come to more sheltered spots at a lower altitude, and to reach our camping-ground for the night—Sûk Wâdy Barada.

And how pleasant a spot is the camp-ground at Sûk Wâdy Barada! A level platform scooped out of the rock and sheltered by it overhangs the valley, which is here broad and verdant. The roofs of the houses of a Syrian village lying below are half hidden

* Although the word translated "foxes" in the Old Testament ordinarily means jackals, as in Judg. xv. 4; Ps. lxxiii. 10, the true fox is found here. Our Lord evidently refers to the fox, not the jackal, when he says of Herod, the cunning and deceitful tyrant, "Go ye and tell that fox." Luke xiii. 32 So also he alludes to its burrowing when he says, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Matt. viii. 20.

by trees, whilst beyond the vale the cliffs rise stern and bold against the eastern sky, perforated by tombs and cut by road and aqueduct. Mountains rise all around. But has this far-away cleft in the mountains of Anti-Lebanon anything to link it with Bible story? Yes. Luke tells us that "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, and *Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene*, . . . the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." And where this Sûk Wâdy Barada, "Fair of the Barada Valley," now stands stood Abila, capital of the province of Abilene, when the forerunner of Christ was preaching repentance in the wilderness of Judæa. A road cut through the solid rock, now unused, an aqueduct, now dry and broken, fragments of temples and dwellings, with tombs, are the only memorials of what once was a noted city, the seat of government of a province and the dwelling-place of the last of the Herods. Abila is linked with secular as well as with sacred history, for Lysanias, its prince in the days of John the Baptist, was murdered through the machinations of Cleopatra of Egypt, whose beauty and fascinations are remembered by many who forget that her gifts were used with a shameless vileness, with a cruelty and with an unscrupulous greed rarely paralleled in the history of human depravity. The revenues wrung from the peasantry of these valleys eighteen hundred

years ago were squandered by Cleopatra in bribes and in profligate orgies. Now they go to Constantinople for purposes not altogether dissimilar. On the maps the spot is called Abila Lysaniæ, after its unfortunate ruler of the days of Gospel story.

There, under our tent-roofs, we "laid us down in peace, and slept, and awaked, for the Lord sustained us," and, awaking, went on our way through Anti-Lebanon, still following up the valley of the Barada.

It would weary the reader were I to attempt to paint with words the grand and varied scenery through which we passed—should I tell of the leaping brook, the cliffs and mountains; of Hermon, now far off, yet shining in the south with a fresh covering of snow that fell last night, or of snow-capped peaks at hand; of narrowing glens and widening vales; of villages embosomed in orchards framed in desolate rocks. The attempt shall not be made. The reader must come for himself and catch the scenes that will live with him as a charming memory.

But he must be prepared for prose as well as poetry. Scenery will not forbid the backache, or keep your horse from casting a shoe, or soften his paces if rough. Saddles will prove hard and mules will fall—there goes one of our mules now! Poor fellow! How helplessly he lies beneath his mountainous load of beds and bedding! There is nothing to be done but untie his pack, release him, permit him, or rather compel him, to get up, and then to replace his load. A work of time this, and one that tries the patience of the muleteer. And now, whilst we stop by the brook for rest, my Abdallah starts after some passing beasts, and

when pursued by Yazeem, trots, gallops, runs, and at length disappears around the northern sweep of a mountain. Happily, he reappears, after a somewhat anxious hour and a half on the master's side, having made the circuit of the mountain, and is captured. So on we jog, reaching Zebdâny, a town of three thousand people in an upland vale; looking up to Bludân, with mountains six and seven thousand feet high just behind it; and pass on to Surghaya, a romantic village at the watershed between the rivers of Damascus and those that flow into the Mediterranean Sea.

As Dean Stanley well notes, here is the birthplace of the Syrian rivers. From Hermon and Lebanon flow southward the Jordan, the river of Palestine; eastward, the Barada, the river of Damascus; northward, the Orontes, the river of Antioch; westward, the Leontes, the river of Phœnicia.

We have followed up the Barada to its source; not long is it till we are riding beside a brook which makes its way, first northward, then westward, amid the hills, descending to meet the ancient Leontes, the modern Litâny, which flows through the broad valley of Cœle-Syria and empties into the Mediterranean between Sidon and Tyre. And now farewell to the ever-charming waters of Damascus!

The stream whose acquaintance we now make is the Yahfûfeh. Near its source stands a village of the same name. Here a stone bridge spans the brook, whilst ruins right and left tell of the glories of the land in days long gone by. Here we arrested our march, pitching our tents on a cliff overlooking the

village in a level spot so small that it scarce accommodates our camp. The atmosphere of these high lands was clear and sharp—bracing and invigorating, yet a trifle cold for tent-dwelling after the sun's rays were withdrawn. But Yakoob's culinary triumphs, with a hot draught of very bad tea (bought in Damascus), made us ready for a good rest amid these peaks of Anti-Lebanon. Our hymn of praise and our evening prayer were not less refreshing to the soul. Why should we not sleep well and be well content, for had we not enjoyed two days of scenery as glorious as man could ask in a land whose very name is an inspiration?

It was to me a surprise to find this region so populous. I had looked for desolate mountains, but found these mountains seamed with fertile vales and dotted with large villages in the midst of grain-fields and orchards. Nor did these mountaineers seem so poor or wretched as those dwelling farther south. On the contrary, the men are sturdy, the women strong and the children vigorous. On this day, at a Moslem saint's tomb, away from any village or town, we fell in with a festival in honor of the saint. People in holiday garb were streaming in from every quarter. Prayers and merrymaking went hand in hand. Banners were waving, guns firing, drums beating and games being played. The men were dressed in every hue of the rainbow; the women, too, though veiled, were enjoying the festivity to the full. Whence they all came was a wonder. But hereabout they live, beyond dispute. The boys, boy-like, followed the howadjis, and showed their vitality by undertaking to stone

us, but our fierce Yazeem charged upon them ferociously, putting them to sudden flight.

The coming day—it was the tenth of April—was to introduce us to the glories of Ba'albek. The reader must bear in mind that two great chains of mountains here run from north to south, parallel with each other and with the Mediterranean coast. The western range

THE GRAND RANGE OF LEBANON.

is Lebanon; the eastern, Anti-Lebanon. Between the two lies the long valley known to the ancients as Coele-Syria, or "Hollow Syria"—to the moderns, as the Bukâ'a, extending for ninety miles. Since leaving Damascus we had been traversing the Anti-Libanus in a northerly course, bearing westward. Now we

were threading its westernmost passes, and soon emerged from the crags on its summit to gaze upon a glorious panorama. Behind us lay the tossing waves of limestone through which we had come; at our feet spread the broad plain of Cœle-Syria. Across the plain rose the range of Lebanon, up whose sides the eye swept swiftly to rest with delight on its long summit wrapped in a mantle of purest white. As we descended, the valley opened before us, checkered with plots of white and red and green and brown, telling of different forms and stages of tillage. Here and there, on mounds, or "tells," were the villages of the peasantry who cultivate the plain. But before reaching the plain we visited the mountain-village of Neby Sheet, or the "prophet Seth," where, if you will believe it, is the tomb of Seth, the son of Adam. Just how this tomb escaped the action of the waters of the Flood the Moslem believers do not tell us; their faith is equal to that of the Christians of Jerusalem, who show the grave of Adam in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. I must apologize for having omitted in the proper place to state that in the rocks near Wâdy Sûk Barada is the tomb of Abel. But, in truth, famous tombs are so plentiful in this land of the past that one may be pardoned for not describing the last resting-places of the antediluvians.

Two hours more, and we note the village of Brithen, probably the old Berothai, telling us that David penetrated these mountain-valleys with his troops after his conquest of Damascus, and took these towns.* It was glorious conquest for Israel, but how went it with

* 2 Sam. viii. 8.

the Syrians? Wives and mothers watered with their tears the graves of the slain. Sitting beside the tombs of father and husband, they wailed until the cliffs of

WOMEN WAILING AT THE TOMB.

the hills re-echoed their grief, making all men to know their matchless sorrows. And how permanent are the habits of the children of the East! for, as we pass this village, the manifestations of grief come to us from it

as in the olden time. The poor Mohammedan women are lamenting at its tombs; their shrill wailings vibrate on the air, rising, swelling, dying away, and rising again, over and over, until, as our distance increases, they fade into silence. Ah, how sorrowful is this wail of the hopeless! Happy they who sorrow not as those without hope!

We descend to the plain, and after our long threading of mountain-passes enjoy the variety of a gallop up its eastern border. Its soil is red and fertile, yet does not lack the ever-present stones of Syrian lands, which are thickly sown over it; the light Eastern plough threads its way through them with friendly accommodation, and the crops of grain and pulse grow up amid them in entire harmony. Syrian soil would be lonely, and would scarce know itself, without a full assortment of stones. We pass the villages of Yehûdah and Tayibeh, which lie on our left. On our right is the noble Anti-Lebanon. Gorges open up into the mountains; they have been dry, but the snows of the winter are melting, and now the water trickles over the hillsides, gathers in the ravines and leaps downward to join the Leontes in its south-westward flow. Again they will be dry. These are the "deceitful brooks" on which the traveler cannot rely as he may upon the perennial fountain.

At ten o'clock we ride by a mean village, then around a hill, and across the plain the famed "six columns" of the great temple of Ba'albek lift themselves above town and tree, boldly against the background of Lebanon. We check our horses. We sit and take in the glorious view, rejoicing that we have been brought

to this landmark in our journey. But if the sight of the temple built with hands be glorious, what shall we say of that not built with hands? This broad plain, framed by Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, checkered with bright colors, sweeping north and south farther than eye can reach, is a sight before which human works grow small and from which the soul looks up to its Maker, God. Yet none the less do we press eagerly on to a closer view of Ba'albek, excelled in magnitude by no ruins in the world but those older temples of the Egyptian Thebes.

Our camp-equipage went direct to the great temple, whilst we turned aside to visit the quarries whence its stones were taken. These quarries are near the foot of the limestone ridge, a half mile to the west of the city. Most interesting is it to scan the very beds from which its great stones were cut so many centuries ago, to see the marks of wedge and chisel, and to note where flaws in the stone have diverted the quarryman's labor to other portions of the rock. And as in the desert of Sienne, far up the Nile, you find an obelisk almost finished, yet undetached from the granite mass, left as the masons of Egypt left it so many ages since, so here, at Ba'albek, one huge stone lies in the quarry, left with the marks of Syrian handicraft, not cut away from its rock-bed, bearing the imagination of the modern traveler in an instant back to the days of Syrian pride and power. The stone chips cut away by hammer and chisel lie about it. You might look for the coming of the workmen from their noonday meal to resume their toil and finish their undertaking. But thus this stone has lain in

the quarry for nearly two thousand years, and thus it will lie for ever. The folly of wasting human force and human life in an effort so senseless will not be repeated. This stone is sixty-eight feet long by about

GREAT STONE IN THE QUARRY AT BA'ALBEK.

fourteen feet in height and width. I found that it took twenty-eight comfortable steps to pace it from end to end.*

From the quarries we made our way through the low, square, flat-roofed huts of the modern town to the grand ruins. We rode our horses into a vaulted way carried beneath the platform on which the temples stood. That it was used as a barrack by the Roman legions in the day of Roman rule is evident, for the numbers of the companies may still be seen

* Its weight is variously computed at from one thousand to fifteen hundred tons.

painted on the walls. This arched underground passage extends a hundred and fifty yards. Emerging from it, you scramble up the pile of rubbish, and are within the temple-court. A little farther we ride, and halt beneath the shadow of the six fluted Corinthian columns of the once-glorious peristyle which are left erect. This peristyle consisted of fifty-four columns, enclosing a court standing upon a platform built up thirty feet above

the surface. Each column rose seventy-five feet above the platform, and the colonnade was surmounted by a highly-wrought entablature fourteen feet in thickness. What a spectacle of grandeur, magnificence and beauty must it have been when this four-sided temple stood perfect in all its details, its court surrounded on every side by these peerless Corinthian columns,

its floor paved with marble mosaic, statues of the gods adorning its sides and the incense burning upon its



SIX COLUMNS OF THE GREAT TEMPLE AT
BA'ALBEK.

altar! But stand now at the western extremity of this temple and look eastward. Broken walls and columns, courts, porches and recesses, stretch before you for a *thousand feet*, telling of what Ba'albek was in the days of its pride. And this is *but one* of its temples. When was it built? and by whom? It is hard to tell, for its history is shrouded in the darkness of an unrecorded past. Under the Roman emperor Antoninus Pius (A. D. 136-161) the most recent of its temple-buildings were constructed, but its solid masonry dates far back of his day. It is certain that the Greeks built here before the Romans, and it is probable that the Phœnicians had temples here before the Greeks. The Phœnician sun-god—Baal—seems to have left his name here in *Ba'al-bek*. It was natural that the Greeks should next have called it Heliopolis, "City of the Sun," and that (as at Bâniâs and elsewhere) the old name should come back, in part at least, after the sway of the conquerors had become a thing of the past.

Our camp was pitched at the very feet of the six columns; their shadows fell upon our tents; the tent-pegs were driven into the sacred platform; our horses were picketed amid broken shafts and our mules were housed in the temple-court. (*See Frontispiece.*)

But the grandeur of our camping-ground did not rob us of our appetite. Our noonday meal, served to us while resting on our carpets at the base of the columns, was welcome. Strengthened by it, we set out for a long tramp through these intricate lines of masonry (which I shall not attempt to describe), then, through a breach out of the Great Temple and around

it, until we stood looking from below upon those huge stones, in the wall which supports the platform of the Great Temple, which are the wonder of all beholders. Elsewhere we should speak with amazement of the use of stones thirty feet long and thirteen feet wide in the construction of a wall, but these are forgotten at Ba'albek in wonder at the three stones so much beyond them in size and weight. If you will find a room thirty feet long and thirteen wide and high, and, having doubled its length, will then fill it with one block of stone, it will be by three feet, and four feet, shorter than are these stones lifted twenty feet above the ground and set in this wall at Ba'albek. These stones long gave their name to the temple, which was spoken of in Greek as the Trilithon, the "Three-Stoned." Vast as is their bulk, they are squared and fitted in their places as closely and accurately as if of a size to be adjusted by a man's hand. By what force and by what machinery the ancients handled stones weighing twelve hundred tons it is not easy for us to tell. But they did it.

How does reality mingle with romance! Just over against this wall with its amazing stones are the poor huts of the Syrian peasants of the modern village. Looking in at the open door of one of these lowly homes, we found that it was "baking-day" in Ba'albek. Two women were seated beside the oven—a cylindrical earthenware pot three feet high; one fed the fire by throwing in sticks, mere switches, and kneaded the dough into cakes; the other took the thin, round, flat cakes, of the size of a dinner-plate, laid them on a pad of the same size, and then dex-

terously clapped them on to the inner surface of the pot. There they stuck until cooked, when they were removed and laid in a pile, whilst the baking of fresh cakes was proceeded with. The women were greatly delighted and amused at our interest in their everyday work. They did not know that we were seeing for the first time a process of which we had read for years, and for which we were on the lookout. They gladly gave us of their warm bread, which we found very palatable whilst fresh and crisp; it seemed to be made mainly of corn meal. Thicker loaves are baked in stationary ovens not unlike those of the West, and are sold in the markets of all the Syrian towns. This thin bread also is seen in the bazaars, piled in stacks and having much the look of big, underdone buckwheat cakes. After its first freshness is gone it takes on a leathery consistency, and is used, as in the olden time, for spoon as well as bread. A fragment is torn off, doubled up into spoon-shape, and dipped into the stew or *leben* (curdled milk), and then spoon and relish are safely landed in the open mouth and swallowed together. This is the "dipping the sop" spoken of in the Gospel. To dip the sop in the dish with another implied closest intimacy; to do so and put the morsel in the mouth of your friend was to give strong evidence of your affection for him. It is so with the Arabs of to-day.*

* "Could you see the bread used you might at first take it for sheets of brown paper. But I will tell you how it assumes that form. The wheat is washed and picked over by hand, sent to the mill on donkey-back, the women accompanying it. On their return a portion is kneaded and made into small balls the size of a biscuit. Now it is ready for the oven, but not to be baked. What do you suppose the

Leaving our friendly bread-bakers, we followed the wall of the Great Temple around by the west, and,

THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN, THE SMALLER TEMPLE AT BA'ALBEK.

turning to the north, reached the "Small Temple" of Ba'albek. This "Small Temple," so called, is oven is like? A pottery barrel (bottomless) is sunk in the ground, a fire is lighted inside, which heats the sides. Two women, a board between them, seat themselves by this oven, then each one takes one of the balls of dough and rolls it out; but having no rolling pin, hands must answer the purpose. Thus they do till it acquires the size of a large dinner-plate; then one of the women waves it on her hand till it triples its original size; then she places it on a round cushion, with which she makes the bread adhere to the side of the oven. The skill is in making the bread thin: it is about the thickness of a newspaper when finished, but if the wheat is good it resembles tissue-paper. Two or three hundred loaves are considered an ordinary baking, and the process takes between three and four hours. Can she hold a book and read while her bread is baking?"—MISS EDDY, in *Woman's Work for Woman*.

larger than the Athenian Parthenon,* yet so dwarfed is it by comparison with the remains of the Great Temple that it is hard for one to believe it who has looked upon that glory of Greek art, standing in such brilliant eminence on its grand pedestal, the Acropolis of Athens. This smaller edifice is commonly called the "Temple of the Sun," but the larger building would seem to have as good a claim to that title. This temple is far better preserved than its larger fellow; its walls are almost intact; its portal, though broken, remains; many of its exquisitely wrought col-

PILLARS FROM BA'ALBEK—Interior of the (Smaller) Temple of the Sun.

umns still stand, and the elaborately carved marble ceiling of the peristyle shows that no labor or expense or artistic skill had been spared in its adornment.

* As Professor Porter ingeniously suggests. Its dimensions are two hundred and twenty-seven by one hundred and seventeen feet; the body of the Parthenon is one hundred and ninety three by seventy-one feet.

In front of this temple is a broken Arabic fort. Indeed, all of these grand structures were united by the Arabs in one great citadel; but for centuries they have been given over to plunderers, to time and the elements. The earthquake has added its destructive forces to their slower agencies, until now Ba'albek is but a glorious ruin.

Not far away, and in the midst of the mean houses of the modern town, is a gem of architecture, the small "Circular Temple," with exterior Corinthian columns in a fine state of preservation. It was probably originally devoted to the worship of Venus. But the pleasure of a visit to it is marred by the filth of the sordid huts around it, and by which it is almost hid.

In the evening the grand court, the six columns that overhung our camp and the Temple of the Sun were brought out into brilliant relief by red lights burned by the "Cook's Tourists," who were with us again. The sight was glorious, but the ruins were yet more impressive in the stillness of night, standing out in ghostly white against the starry sky. Ba'albek needs no artificial coloring to give it eminence in beauty and majesty.

The village of Ba'albek is well watered, and abounds in mulberry and poplar trees. Its inhabitants are largely Christian. Two English ladies have consecrated their lives to their instruction with singular devotion, dwelling amid them and teaching them in letters and in religion. Our American missionaries at Zahleh, in the Lebanon, extend their labors hither, using the school as the nucleus of a congregation. It was a pleasure to us to meet here and to have at

our table the Rev. Frederick W. March, well known to us before, who had ridden up from Zahleh to visit this quarter of his wide field. In the evening two of our number accompanied him to the meeting which he held, and were delighted with the manifest improvement wrought by the labors of the good Englishwomen. Still more encouraging was it to find here a young Syrian woman, refined and godly, educated by the American missionaries in the seminary at Beirût, now herself a missionary-teacher of the girls of her own Syria. The good seed, sown by good women from a distant land, is bearing precious fruit amid the mountains and in the valleys of Lebanon.

CHAPTER XXIX.

DOWN THE BUKÂ'A TO ZAHLEH AND BEIRÛT.

THE ride down the descending plain of the Bukâ'a on a brilliant morning in April is a delight. The air is fresh and pure; in fact, it is a mountain-air, for Ba'albek stands three thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine feet above the sea-level, two thousand feet higher than the top of Tabor. As you move southward the peaks of Anti-Lebanon are on your left, the ridges and summits of snowy Lebanon on your right. The brown and green, banded and checkered, plain stretches before you. Villages on "tells" (mounds that look as if raised by human hands) dot the vista. Streams gurgle and leap through the mountain-ravines to join the Litâny. Even a road is here—not in condition for wheeled vehicles, but stretching with attractive smoothness before riders. Where every step is over ground heretofore untrodden by you, and amid scenes so linked with historic associations, the journey is full of delightful excitement. The company of Mr. March added to our pleasure, as it added his intimate knowledge of the country and its people.

At one of the villages, standing upon its tell, Tulya, we were turned aside by our friend that we might visit its mission-school. The school-house was a mud-

walled, flat-roofed room about fourteen feet square. In it were clustered a motley group of boys and little girls busy at their lessons. Arabic maps and wall-cards and Arabic school-books gave the material for instruction. The teacher was but a lad of nineteen, modest and yet earnest in his good work, and not a bad sample of what is being done for Syria by our missionaries. The son of a poor serving-woman, he was received into a mission-school, where he proved himself a bright as well as diligent pupil, excelling especially in mathematics. His heart was reached as well as his head; he united with the Church and became a teacher. At nineteen he was sent to this village to take charge of the school established by the mission and to represent Protestantism. From his wages he not only maintained himself, but also his mother and a younger brother. There is good material in these Arabic-speaking races of Syria; the results already achieved show that only Christian influences are needed to work it into noble types of manhood and womanhood.

The boys and girls were mustered for our inspection, and did their best in reading and reciting. Of course speeches from the howadjis were administered, translated by Mr. March, and some of the grand sultan's debased coin was entrusted to the teacher for investment in cakes for the children, that our memory might be sweet. The children belong to the Greek Church community, the school finding favor on account of the dissatisfaction of the people with their priest, whose son had committed a murder and was suffered to go unpunished.

To note a less savory object, give a glance at the village dunghill. What a hill it is! And no wonder, since it is the gathering of ages. Every town has its dunghill—if large enough, a number of them. The refuse, instead of being put on the fields, where it will be of use, is cast out in front of the houses. Here, on the Tulya dunghill, lies a man asleep. It is a favorite lounging-place for the idle poor everywhere. So it probably was three thousand years since, for in Hannah's burst of thanksgiving for the gift of her boy Samuel she sings:

“He [the Lord] raiseth up the poor out of the dust,
And lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,
To set them among princes,
And to make them inherit the throne of glory.”*

Jeremiah, too, in his Lamentations over Zion, cries:

“They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets;
They that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.”†

But whilst we were meditating on boys and girls, dunghills and priests, Abdallah seized the opportunity for a little entertainment on his own account. Breaking loose from the lad who held his bridle, he entered into a “free fight”—Abdallah against the field. In a moment the quiet village-street was in an uproar. Horses were neighing, biting, kicking, rearing and plunging, and men and boys calling and screaming. At length the disturber of the peace was secured by a plucky Arab, and now Dr. L.'s bay, “Dan,” comes trotting back from around a house which he had found

* 1 Sam. ii. 8.

† Lam. iv. 5.

it wise to put between himself and mischief, with head raised and neck arched and a "Where's-the-horse-that-wants-to-fight" air in his eye, that is too evident a sham to impose even on our donkey. "No, no, Dan; that will not do! Boast of your discretion if you will, but not of your valor!"

Now, on down the Bukâ'a a little farther, and a substantial stone khân is reached, with a pretty stream from Lebanon, crossing the plain to join the Litâny, flowing in front of it. Here we rest, water our horses and take our luncheon, and then move on toward Zahleh, which we have been trying to discern amid the spurs of Lebanon. But it is not seen until the glen in which it abides is gained. Turning to the right and ascending this ravine, we come upon it, The town occupies the two slopes of an opening, V-shaped cleft in the mountains; its whitewashed houses mount the two hills, step above step, all visible at once; whilst a grove of poplars fills the space at the foot of the two meeting slopes where its stream flows eastward to the plain.

Zahleh is the largest of the villages of Lebanon, containing ten thousand inhabitants, almost all Greek or Latin Christians. But its interest to us lay in its being the home and field of our missionary friends, Gerald F. Dale and Frederick W. March, and in its associations with heroic labors and victories of truth over error. Mr. March first guided us to his own modest home on the northern cliff, and then around by the ridge westward to the house of Mr. Dale on the southern slope. Our horses' feet clattered up the step-like streets, going in single file. The bright faces

and salutations of women as well as men by the way surprised us, until we learned that these were Christian converts. In at the gate we rode, and, leaving our horses in the court and lower story, we ascended to the living-rooms of Mr. Dale. We were expected, and were received with warmth, and greatly enjoyed our visit. Nine of us, all ministers of the Presbyterian Church of America, seated at table, made a goodly company. Talk of home and talk of the work in Lebanon made the hours swift-winged, delightful and instructive. No long-faced or sour ascetics are these Lebanon missionaries, but men young and brave, full of enthusiasm for their glorious calling, and full of love for those to whom they bear the gospel of hope. We visited the mission-church at Zahleh, a substantial, tile-roofed stone structure, heard of the conflicts, the persecutions and the workings of the Spirit amid which it had been built; we talked of the out-stations, the four churches that have been gathered and housed, and we thanked God for what he had done and was doing through his servants, the messengers of the churches of America.

But part we must, as some of our party were to sail from Beirût on the coming Monday, yet it was with the expectation of soon meeting again in Beirût, to send the master of the mansion back charmingly reinforced.

With clattering hoofs again, horses and riders filed out of Zahleh and skirted Lebanon, with the valley on our left, until we struck the diligence-road from Damascus to Beirût at Shtoora. The sun was setting as we turned westward and ascended Lebanon to

Mekseh, where our party made its last camp. The ground on which our tents were pitched was rough enough—a ploughed field—but the prospect from it as we looked eastward was one long to be remembered. If the reader has kept well up in the geography and topography of the tour, he will apprehend it—the Plain of El-Bukâ'a at our feet, romantic Lebanon all about us on rear and left and right, and king-ly Hermon once more lifting his snowy ridge in the south. Darkness crept from the east over the glorious scene as the sun sank in the west, bidding us turn in to our tents to prepare for the close of our camp-life. At eight o'clock Antone's bell called us to our dining-room, within whose canvas walls we had so often been comforted in body after days of hard work; and dinner was followed by our family prayers, the spiritual refreshment by which mind and heart had so constantly been fed and strengthened on our way. Then came the preparation of letters of commendation for the dragomans, Michael Abdou and Michael Chaya, and the consideration of the weighty question of the "bakshish" to be given to muleteers and servants. Even the dogs understood that the tour of the united party here closed, and deserted us, without one grateful farewell wag of a tail, to attach themselves to some more promising company.

We slept but poorly. Nearness to a road was an unaccustomed feature in our nights' experience. The tramp of travelers, the rattle of the diligence between Damascus and Beirût, with the usual noises of a highway, broke our rest. The horn of the Cook party, camped a little lower down the mountain, blew at half-

past four o'clock; at half-past five Abdou lifted the flap of the tent to call us with his wonted pleasant "Good-morning, doctór! Good-morning, Mr. Dickey! Good-morning, sir!" At six we were summoned to breakfast, and the men began to draw the tent-pegs, loosen the cords and pack the baggage. At seven the "Stars and Stripes" were taken down from the dining-room tent, the tent struck, and we mounted our horses to cross Lebanon and make our last day's ride between Joppa and Beirût. Bakshîsh having been distributed, nothing remained but to take a long look over the glorious landscape and start for Beirût.

The road winds upward to a height of five thousand feet above the sea, and then descends steadily until it reaches the level of the Mediterranean at Beirût. It is finely graded and well built. Its scenery has often been described, for many travelers pass over it to Damascus who do not take the full Palestine tour; and it is worthy of the praises so freely bestowed upon it. Glorious mountains, with snowy summits, ravines, valleys and glens, charm the pilgrim on the eastern ascent. Snow-fields, covering with their white drapery the mountain-side just off the road, tempt us to the luxury of making snowballs and giving each other a friendly missile on the historic heights of Lebanon. Reaching the summit, we are met by a ravishing view. The Mediterranean lies beneath us and stretches before us to the western horizon. Clouds form on its surface before our eyes, rise and then sail inward toward the mountains, to spread in milky banks between us and the lowlands. Mountain-villages of Druse, of Maronite and of Greek Syrian stand out with distinctness on

the hilltops and in sheltered mountain-nooks. The whole side of the mountain is terraced, and is carefully cultivated with vines, figs, olives, mulberries and with grain.

As we descend the warm sun sends the clouds aloft, and Beirût is seen, with orchards on the hither side, and beyond, its charming bay. The sea is of an exquisite blue. In the harbor lie vessels at anchor, and white sails glisten farther away. But the sun is now felt as it was not in the higher altitudes, so that we are glad of the shelter of the walls of a *khân* whilst we make our noonday halt.

Beirût seemed to be at our feet as we looked down from the head of the pass, but we found that when the lower level was reached there yet lay a broad strip of plain between us and it. But how charmingly novel was this plain! how strongly in contrast with other parts of Syria! The smooth, well-made road led amid orchards of apricot, fig and orange, groves of mulberry and clumps of palms. Nearer the city, summer parlors, rural cafés and pretty residences were seen on right and left. Not foot-passengers only, not camels and donkeys only, but wheeled vehicles used the road. Everything spoke of a prosperous city at hand; and prosperous Beirût is, for it has grown in fifty years from a Syrian walled village of five thousand people to a city of eighty thousand.

Having traversed the eastern suburb and passed the gate of the walled town, we rode through its crooked lanes to the Bellevue Hotel, which stands on the border of the sea with a fine outlook over its blue waters. Here the four of our party who were to sail for Con-

stantinople and Europe the coming week tarried,* whilst my son and myself took a guide to the house of the Rev. W. W. Eddy, D. D., of the American Presbyterian Mission, in response to an urgent invitation which had reached us before leaving Jerusalem, where we were joined on Monday by Mr. Dickey, who had stayed over the Sabbath in Zahleh.

* The Rev. S. C. Logan, D. D., of Scranton, Pa., and the Rev. Messrs. Russell Cecil, J. J. Chisolm and Edward L. Warren of Kentucky. The Rev. C. C. Dickey, of Philadelphia, and the Rev. Joseph H. Dulles, now of Belvidere, N. J., continued with the author.

CHAPTER XXX.

IN BEIRÛT.

BEIRÛT has no great claim to ancient historic fame. Though doubtless an old town, its place on the page of history previous to Roman times is not conspicuous.*

Its situation, with the nearest approach to a harbor of any spot on the Syrian coast this side of Egypt, would attract a population as soon as men began to sail the sea and exchange the products of other lands for those of Lebanon and the plain at its feet and the towns beyond the mountains. But, though the city

* For those who care to know it, it may be said that Beirût is the Berytus of the Greek and Latin geographers. Augustus Cæsar made it a Roman colony, giving it the name of Felix Julia. Herod the Great—and *bad*—here held a court, not long before the birth of our Lord, to secure the condemnation of his sons Aristobulus and Alexander, and so to afford him a pretext for their execution. He had them strangled at Sebaste, as Samaria was called in his day, soon after this. Agrippa adorned the city with amphitheatre, baths and the luxurious edifices of a Roman city. Titus here celebrated the birthday of his father Vespasian, making his Jewish prisoners murder each other in gladiatorial conflicts in honor of the day. After the Christian era Berytus became the seat of an academy and school of Greek literature. During the Crusades it was taken by the Christian forces (in 1110), but finally fell into the hands of the Saracens, and has been under the Crescent from that day to this.

that grew here did not make any great figure in ancient records, the quay on which travelers from abroad now land is built of the granite columns of edifices long since overthrown, telling of old-time wealth and luxury. But from the times of Saracenic power to our own day the more modern Beirût has been a mean little Turkish city, with the narrow

BEIRÛT AND LEBANON.

streets, the shabby bazaars, the dirt and dogs, the nuisances, the walls and gates, characteristic of towns of its class. The new Beirût that has grown up without the walls is a far different place. On its land side, the Lebanon district is far more prosperous, being under the protection of the great powers of Europe (one good result of the massacres of 1860) and having a Christian governor. The new road to Damascus

also facilitates internal trade. On the other hand, from over the sea European capital has sought occupation at Beirût: steamships come and go, making it a centre of distribution for Syria, and Western energy, taste and thrift have built up a city which, though Oriental still, is brighter, cleaner and more comfortable than the ordinary Eastern city. Not so much is it that this has been the direct work of foreigners as that foreign influences have quickened the native mind to new life, energy and freedom. But it would be a fatal omission not to add that the influence of the American missionaries, with that of more recent English workers, has had very much to do with the awakening and elevation of the native population. Thus, from being a Moslem village, Beirût has become almost a Christian city—not a Protestant city, but a city largely of Greek, Latin and Maronite Christians, with some Jews and a small but influential community of Protestant Christians, partly foreign, but mainly native.

It was on Saturday, April 12th, that we reached Beirût, and made our temporary home with our friends of the American Mission; and *home* it proved to be. How grateful, after the toils and changes of our pilgrim-life, were the comforts of a Christian household, its restful atmosphere, its family life, its family religion! "Given to hospitality" is a text practised, whether preached or not, by these good people. To one studying Syria this hospitality is doubly valuable, as it puts at his service the accumulated information of many years, and introduces him to the persons whom he would meet and the

places he would see. But this is said in acknowledgment of favors received, not to encourage others to follow our example—unless the kindness of an old fellow-student should compel them to come in. At the table we were introduced to various Syrian dishes—kibby, leben, pannag, dibs, etc.—in which are recognized the viands of Bible times, often retaining the very names by which the old Hebrews called them. Indeed, we were constantly entertained and instructed in Syrian affairs by our kind hosts.

When evening came, one by one or in little groups, the teachers in the Sabbath-schools dropped in for the "Teachers' Meeting." They took their seats in the large hall of the house with less of chat than would be heard from as many American teachers, for it is a new and strange thing for the two sexes thus to be brought face to face in Syria. But the attendance would have put many an American Sabbath-school to the blush, seventy-five young men and women, with a few of greater age, being present. Most interesting was it to note the clearness and intelligence with which the women as well as the men read from the Arabic Bible, and the readiness with which they responded to Dr. Eddy's questions. Nice points of interpretation were raised and discussed, and everything proved intellectual as well as moral quickening as a result of missionary labor. The singing at the opening and close of the meeting was very pleasant. After the regular exercises were over some time was spent in singing Arabic hymns to Arabic tunes, and social intercourse was encouraged.

What a change is this from the state of things in

Beirût in the year 1834, when Mrs. Sarah L. H. Smith rejoiced at securing the right to educate one little girl, Raheel Ata, and when women themselves scoffed at the idea of women learning to read as something unheard of and absurd, asserting that they had no more business with letters than donkeys had!*

It was a pleasant surprise to me that I was permitted to meet this very Raheel (Rachel), of whom I had read when a student, as the wife of the highly-respected Butrus Bistany, the editor of a paper in Beirût, of an Arabic dictionary, of an Arabic encyclopædia and of other works. Being invited to their home on the occasion of the baptism of a grandchild, I found it one not of comfort only, but of elegance, and was introduced to an interesting Christian circle of children and kindred.

The good seed bears good fruit under the shadow of mighty Lebanon.

Early as it was in the year, summer had come to Beirût, and the Sabbath brought with it a "sirocco," that warm, oppressive wind from the south-east which spreads a haze over the sky and carries languor to men. Yet the day was greatly enjoyed by us, so full was it of matters of varied interest. We were permitted to see something of the modes and results of Christian labor in this important Syrian centre, of which we had often read.

Our first visit was to the female seminary, so ably

* June 30, 1834, Mrs. Smith writes: "I feel somewhat thoughtful this afternoon in consequence of having heard of the ready consent of the friends of a little girl that I should take her as I proposed, and educate her."

conducted by devoted and accomplished American women, where the daughters of Syria are educated for usefulness in the home and in fields of Christian activity among the various sects and nationalities which they represent. But let me throw aside what I have just written on this subject to insert some paragraphs from the pen of the Rev. Henry H. Jesup, D. D., of Beirût, which have come under my eye. He writes of this seminary:

“What changes and contrasts are suggested by such a building, and for such an object, on the shores of Old Phœnicia! Young maidens of the children of Japhet coming seven thousand miles across the great ocean beyond the Pillars of Hercules to teach the Semitic girls the religion of their own greatest Prophet, the Incarnate Son of God! An American school for Syrian girls! An evangelical school for Moslem and Druse, Greek and Maronite, Papal-Greek, Jakobite, Armenian and Jewish girls! Any school for girls would have been an impossibility when the American missionaries first landed in Syria. The people thought there was more hope of teaching a cat than a girl. Girls were to be servants, slaves, beaten, despised, degraded, dishonored. They could not be trusted. The Mohammedan religion had destroyed the family, degraded women, heaped ignominy and reproach on the girls. Secluded at home, veiled when abroad, without training, veracity, virtue or self-respect, men despised them and they despised themselves.

“But a change has come over men, and women too, in Syria. In 1878 this Beirût seminary received from paying pupils more than eleven hundred dollars. It

was the severest year in financial depression ever known in Syria, and yet the receipts from the parents of girls for their board and tuition were larger than in any previous year.

"It is a high-school, teaching Arabic grammar, arithmetic, algebra, astronomy, botany, physiology, history, with music, drawing, English and French, to those willing to pay for them. It is also a thoroughly evangelical and biblical school. All the pupils are instructed daily in the Bible, and brought under constant religious influence in the church and Sabbath-school and in the seminary family. Nothing of religious instruction is abated or relaxed on account of the religion or nationality of any pupil. Her parents know that it is a religious institution, and yet are willing to pay for its privileges. The Orientals do not believe in non-religious schools. They think every man bound to have a religion of some kind, and prefer to have their children taught our religion rather than none at all.

"The building cost about eleven thousand dollars. The lumber was brought from the State of Maine. The windows and doors were made in Lowell, Mass., under the direction of Dr. Hamlin, who intended them for Robert College. The stone pavement of the floors was brought from Italy, the tiles for the roof from Marseilles. The cream-colored sandstone of which the walls are built was quarried near Beirût; the stone stairs are from Mount Lebanon. The zinc roof of the cupola is from England, the glass from Vienna, and the kerosene oil with which the building is lighted is 'Pratt's Astral Oil.'

“The pupils are native Syrian and Egyptian girls from ten to sixteen years of age. They are bright, quick to learn, and many of them would be called decidedly pretty. Nine out of every ten have black eyes. A blonde in Syria is rare, and consequently greatly admired. These girls go forth from the seminary cultivated, refined, ready to be teachers of youth or wives and mothers of families. The majority of the graduates—indeed, almost all—have been truly converted. This seminary is a light shining in a dark place, and it has been shining to such good purpose that the dark place itself is becoming light. Beirût is a city of schools, and it has none more useful or successful than this American female seminary.”

Not the least valuable work of this seminary is the education of girls to fitness for companionship with the young men trained in the college. The ignorant and degraded women of the East too often drag down their educated husbands and neutralize their influence over their children. This seminary and other mission-schools for girls are exerting an influence over the coming generation that will be felt for good by ages yet beyond.

At nine o'clock the Arabic church-service commenced in the American mission-church, a substantial and comely building hard by the seminary. The congregation numbers from three hundred to four hundred and fifty, and is made up of well-dressed, intelligent-looking men and women, with a large force of young people. It embraces not only the members of the church, but also strangers from other parts of Syria,

who have heard of this church and its preacher, and wish to see and hear for themselves. The pulpit has long been occupied by Henry H. Jessup, D. D. At this time Dr. Eddy was in charge of the church, Dr. Jessup being in America, and conducted a full service—prayers, reading, hymns, sermon, all in Arabic. It was a sight full of cheer to the Christian heart.

At 11 A. M. came an English service in the same place, with preaching by one of our company, followed by the administration of the Lord's Supper. There was quite a congregation of European and American residents, of travelers—a number of whom were now in Beirût—and of Syrians who understood English. Then, at 2 P. M., the Arabic Sabbath-school met, under the superintendency of Dr. George E. Post of the Syrian College. A goodly sight it was—classes grouped in the pews, boys and girls by the hundred, taught by Syrian men and women, and sending up that humming buzz so musical in the ears of the Sabbath-school worker of any clime. But before the classes got to their work the superintendent treated the school to a story, the doors being locked when he began and not unlocked until he was done, as an inducement to punctuality. Then came the Arabic hymn and reading and prayer, and hymn and lesson-study.

One thing seemed to me to deserve criticism: the people, having dropped the Oriental sign of reverence—the putting off the shoes—have not adopted the Western habit of uncovering the head. If the fez be kept on the head, the shoes should be put off; if the shoes be kept on, the head should be uncovered.

A distinct Sabbath-school building is now being erected in the rear of the church.

Our stay at Beirût afforded full opportunity to visit another of the great agencies in the work of Syrian regeneration and elevation—the American College—and to form some estimate of its value. This truly noble institution stands on a fine headland on the southern side of the city, looking out on the Mediterranean. Its position is suggestive of its aims and influence; seen of all, it looks upon all who enter or go from Beirût. Excepting possibly its sister college on the Bosphorus, near Constantinople—Robert College, born also of American missionary zeal—I know not the literary institution so gloriously placed. Lebanon bands the sky on north and east, with great Sûnîn rising white in the background; Beirût, city and harbor, slumbers on the right; whilst westward stretches boundlessly the glittering, the exquisitely blue, Mediterranean Sea. The work it is doing is in keeping with its site. Here the young men of Syria are being trained by men of eminent ability and of devoted godliness to fitness to influence their countrymen. Not only is an academic education given in connection with religious instruction, but there is also a pharmaceutical department and a medical department, where students are trained in pharmacy, and where others are qualified to carry the blessings of a sound medical education into their practice among the people. These young Syrian doctors are building up large practices in the cities around as well as in Beirût.*

* How greatly medical education is needed in Syria may be judged from the following testimony of an eye-witness: "When the writer

The theological department is not connected immediately with the college, being in the hands of the Presbyterian Mission. In it the college graduates are prepared for the duties of the preacher, pastor and evangelist. Thus the college is sending forth men to comfort the body, instruct the mind and bless the soul wherever the Arabic tongue is spoken. With such men for instructors as Drs. Bliss, Van Dyke, Wort-

was in Syria, fifteen years ago, a great demand existed for qualified physicians. Native doctors there were, but they were the worst and most ignorant of quacks, knowing nothing of anatomy, nothing of physiology, nothing of hygiene. They wrote charms, applied leeches, used the burning-iron, fed patients suffering from inflammation of the bowels with cucumbers and quinces, and made as much noise as possible in the sick room. When a person in the neighborhood was ill and they not sent for, they would procure some of their friends to go to the family of the sick one and upbraid them for not sending for the *hakim*, for if they loved the sick one they would try and save his life and send for the doctor. This argument was generally too personal to be resisted, and the doctor would soon be sent for. When he arrived he would look at the patient wisely, never feel the pulse—for he did not know how—propose for a moderate charge a certain kind of medicine which might do good, but was not reliable; but for double the pay he had a better sort of remedy, and if they loved the patient at all they would take this; but this was nothing compared with another remedy which was very dear, and which they would most certainly buy if they loved the patient as they should. Then would commence a dickering about the price, with enough noise and gesticulation to make a well person sick; and all in the presence and hearing of the patient. At last, a bargain being struck, the medicine would be brought, only to make the patient worse; and then a new bargain for a new kind of treatment would ensue until the patient died. As respects surgery, it has been a lost art in Syria until restored by foreigners. The number of cripples, maimed and deformed among the people is very great. Everywhere is seen, in misshapen bodies, the effect of accidents where broken bones have grown together in whatever way they happened to be when the knitting process began."

bet, Post, Dennis, Lewis, it cannot fail to exert an immense influence on its students, and through them on the land.

And now, if we put "the Press" as the third of the great agencies employed in the mission-work centring in Beirût, it is not because it is inferior to its competitors, preaching and education. It preaches and it educates. The press building fitly stands beside the church and the seminary. What the voices of preacher and teacher utter in the ear it multiplies a thousand-fold and addresses to the eye; it sends the truth to myriads of those whom no preacher or teacher can reach; it penetrates homes bolted and barred against the missionary. Nor is its influence confined to Syria. Bibles, books, tracts and papers from the American Mission Press of Beirût go to distant lands where Arabic is read—beyond Jordan to the Bedouin Arabs, to Mesopotamia, to Egypt, to farther Africa. When we were in Beirût an order was being filled for Egypt of twenty-two hundred copies of the Arabic Bible. Professor Blyden, of Liberia, got Arabic Bibles from Beirût to give to traders from the interior of Africa.

Nor are religious works only printed here. School-books, scientific books, historical books and books of information are sent forth to meet the demands of the awaking mind of Syria.

With these good agencies should be mentioned the British Syrian schools, the "Mott Schools" as they are commonly called—schools established by an earnest English gentleman and lady of that name, not only in Beirût, but in a number of towns and villages. To these schools they have devoted their own time and

means, while securing assistance from England. They have infant schools, day-schools for older pupils, boarding-schools for girls and schools for the blind.

Thus a great and good work for the moral, mental and spiritual renovation of the people of Syria is going forward. Seed is sown; fruit is seen; but the full harvest will appear in the future. If America takes no part by force of arms or by diplomacy in that "Eastern Question" which is the puzzle and fear of Europe, it is contributing to the solution of that vexed question in a way more excellent by its missions, its colleges and its presses. There can be no permanent improvement not based on a higher intelligence and morality among the people themselves.

On the other hand, the decayed and sapless churches of the land put forth every effort to withstand the progress of gospel truth, and Rome expends much labor and money in resisting the threatened reformation. To meet the influence of Protestant missions it has built up in Beirût a great college for young men and a stately convent for girls. In the villages, when the American Mission opens a school, Rome plants one beside it to keep the lambs from the clutch of Protestant wolves. Thus education is spreading. Even the Moslem population has found itself unable to resist the demand that the young shall be taught, and a *Mohammedan school for girls* has been established in Beirût.

It was a brilliant day, with a hot sun, when we took the excursion to the Nahr el-Kelb, the "Dog River" of the Arabs, the Lycus Flumen, "Wolf River," of the ancients. This excursion is one not to be omitted

by those who tarry for any length of time in Beirût. It would be a tempting ride for the pleasure-seeker, but is more to the lover of sites associated with far-away ages and events. Our party consisted of seven riders, but it was a great change that three of the seven were ladies. Four of our friends of the Palestine tour were on their way to Constantinople, but the missions of Sidon, Beirût and Aintâb furnished us four companions in their place. Leaving the city, we struck across the suburbs to where the Beirût River flows into the sea, and then followed the coast eastward and northward. The pretty bay commemorates the slaying of the dragon by St. George, believed to have taken place on its shores; it is "St. George's Bay." But if the pictures of the combat between the patron saint of England and the dragon are true representations of that historic event, the saint was much more happy in the animal he rode that day than was I on my ride over the same strand. How did I mourn my beloved though hot-headed Abdallâh, who had been surrendered on our arrival at Beirût! In all my journeying up and down the hills and plains of Judæa, Samaria and Galilee I did not suffer as in this twelve miles upon the horrible beast furnished me by the Beirût stable. Nor was my son much better mounted. His horse, if less villainously rough, had the amiable habit of lying down in the road. It would be unfair, no doubt, to say that all Beirût had no better roadsters than these; we will charitably trust that it had few worse. But a gallop is bearable on any horse (excepting this white beast of Beirût to which I was affixed); so off we started at a round

pace over the shingly beach, with Lebanon and snowy Sûnîn on our right and the sparkling sea on our left, while in the distance before us a bold, rocky promontory jutted into the bay. Beyond this promontory the Nahr el-Kelb pours its waters into the sea. But it is on the promontory that the antiquarian finds that which arrests his attention. First we note the road. It is an old Roman road, constructed in the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. But, as was usual, those incomparable road-makers built their pavements upon roadways laid out by monarchs who had ruled before the tramp of Italian armies shook lands and thrones. Having reached the rocky headland, if we dismount and climb it, we shall find evidence that great kings and mighty armies passed this way when Rome was yet a petty village—nay, long ages before Romulus built the wall over which Remus leaped in derision. On a rock near the top of the cliff, which is about one hundred feet in height, is an inscription telling of the cutting of this road by a Phœnician prince. But another tablet tells how Sennacherib marched over this pass with his proud Assyrian hosts seven hundred years before Christ was born in Bethlehem. A hundred and eighty-five thousand men of that army, whose footfalls echoed from sea to cliff as they trod this path, were to fall in one night by God's avenging hand, and the discomfited monarch would come back in shame, to be assassinated by his own sons in the house of Nisroch his god.* But there is another tablet, cut here by a monarch as proud, as valiant and as ambitious as the lion of Nin-

* Read the story in 2 Kings, chs. xviii., xix.

evenh, who lived and conquered seven hundred years earlier—a tablet cut by Rameses II. to tell of the progress of his victorious hosts from the land of the Nile, the pyramids and obelisks to the far-off Euphrates, fourteen hundred years before Christ. Truly, this road could tell tales which the world would stand still to hear.

The tablets and inscriptions are badly worn by the storms of the centuries, but keen-eyed antiquaries have deciphered them, so that the unlearned may look upon these monuments
of the far-past
ages and recall
the great conquerors who trod
where they now
stand.

But remount and
ride a little farther,
passing the promontory,
and a scene
of natural beauty

TABLETS AT NAHR EL-KELB.

opens before you, carrying your soul above the Pharaohs and Sennacheribs to the Maker of all. The little river breaks its way through precipitous cliffs, green with shrubbery below, gray in the rock and crag above. It boils and foams and dashes downward, and then silently joins its waters with those of the sea. Conflicts over, boisterous passions subdued, vexing troubles left behind, so does the righteous soul enter into the calm sea of everlasting life.

A little way up the glen a stone bridge spans the

river, and beyond an arched aqueduct adds beauty to the scene. Just at the river's mouth is a little khân, a mere shed, where an Arab serves to you, in tiny cups, black coffee, made on a little brazier. Here, reclining on mats and shawls, we rested, shaded from the noonday sun, and enjoying the outlook, up the glen, across the broadened stream where fishermen lazily threw their nets, and over the ever-beautiful Mediterranean. Refreshed, we turned again to the city with pleasant memories of the Nahr el-Kelb, its rocks, its inscriptions and its romantic glen.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FROM BEIRÛT TO SIDON.

A WEEK'S ride up and down Phœnicia left me in amazement at the stupid slothfulness of the Israelites in not taking and holding it when called to do so by their divine King. In the month of April, certainly, it is a land of attractive beauty, and bears every mark of having been a land of large resources. To have held it and rightly used it would have given the Hebrews not only fertile farms and orchards, but most valuable seaports also.

It was on a brilliant Friday morning that Mr. Dickey, my son and myself, led by the Rev. W. K. Eddy of Sidon, left the hospitable home of Dr. Eddy for a tour through the "coasts of Tyre and Sidon." The imposing cavalcade of our past journey was not now repeated. We traveled in more humble style, having neither tent nor camping-equipage, dragoman nor dog; even our long-eared bugler was missing. We trusted to our missionary guide to provide us shelter and food. One muleteer, with a horse, carried our "traps;" a horse-keeper, with a second horse, bore capacious saddle-bags with room for provisions and simple table-furniture.

Leaving the city, we struck southward, across the

promontory of Râs Beirût, to the sea. Our horses were serviceable beasts, not bad walkers and always ready for a gallop, so that we could make good time. Emerging from the city, we were soon following narrow alleys cut in the red sandy soil, fenced by hedges of tall cactus, harsh, angular and bristling with thorns, yet blooming with rich yellow blossoms and with forming fruit. Over the cactus-hedges the mulberry trees,

PALMER-WORM, OR YOUNG OF LOCUSTS.*

the olives, oranges, lemons and figs rose, and palms waved their stately plumés. These are the "gardens of Beirût," which spread in a plain of rich verdure about the city and up to the foot of Lebanon.

* *Gasam*, the palmer-worm of Joel i. 4; Amos iv. 9, says Canon Tristram.

But here, as elsewhere, the tiller of the soil must contend with foes. In the lanes dividing the orchards we found men, women and boys hard at work fighting the swarms of young locusts that were invading orchard and field. Trenches had been dug at the roadside, and the laborers were earnestly engaged in sweeping the hopping black swarms into these trenches for decent burial. But, strange to say, the youthful locusts objected to this palm-branch brushing into the grave, and persisted in not staying brushed even by palms. The task of the toilers was not an easy one. But perseverance will diminish, if it does not entirely remove, these pests of husbandry, of whose destructive voracity the Scriptures so often speak. I noticed that great black ants were aiding the human workers; they would spring with swift leaps fiercely on the locusts, overpower them and bear them away as provision for their families.

Leaving the orchards, we came out upon the great mounds of red sand which, blown landward by the strong south-westerly winds, constantly threaten, and sometimes invade, the cultivated fields. Then we pass through a fine grove of the stone-pine,* tall and umbrella-topped, said to have been planted two hundred years ago by the Druse ruler, Fakir ed-Dîn, to arrest the invading march of the sand—a process that might well be continued by the present rulers if there were rulers who cared for the land. If boys had been in our company, they would have been interested in the dry sticks here and there rising oddly from the very

* This stone-pine is the Hebrew *berosh*, sometimes translated "cypress" in our English Bible.

tops of the pines; they are limed for the purpose of entrapping the birds who may incautiously set their feet on these treacherous supports.

STONE-PINE—"FIR" (*Pinus maritima*).

The sandhills passed, we came out on the shore of the Mediterranean, which we followed, and which it is almost impossible not to call, over and over again, the blue, the sparkling, the beautiful sea. On this Phœnician coast a succession of charming coves is formed by a succession of rocky headlands jutting out into the sea. On these curved baylets the waves break sometimes in tinkling music, sometimes in roaring surf. Back of the beach stretches the plain, at times but a

narrow strip of arable land, and again following the receding hills into broad fields. Back of the plain rise the hills, and beyond them the mountains, which form the strong background to the ever-varying yet ever-beautiful picture.

In this last week of April the fields of barley and wheat were nearly ready for harvesting; the lupine bean was being gathered, and goats were feeding on the plants from which the beans had been stripped. In places the bright-robed ploughmen were at work, with their little brown and black cattle (no larger than our calves), turning the sod, or rather scratching it, for another class of beans which were sown in the slender furrows by the husbandmen for a second crop from the willing soil.

THE SOWER OF SEED.

Here too we are greeted again by the comely shape and foliage of the carob tree, which we had before met and observed with interest in Southern Judæa. It is the *Ceratonia siliqua* of the botanists, and bears the pods vulgarly known as "St. John's bread," from the mistaken fancy that the locusts eaten by John the Baptist in the wilderness were the locust-like fruit of this tree, and not the black-legged, hopping small fry

whom we had just encountered in such force.* The latter, the insect locust, has been an article of food from the earliest times. In the Levitical law the locusts were expressly named as permissible food;† they were dried and pounded into a meal to be made into cakes, or, stripped of their legs, dried and eaten with salt. That the ascetic John, in his wilderness abode, should eat them was quite natural.

If the pods of the carob tree had been called the

"Prodigal Son's bread," the title would have come nearer the truth, for the "husks which the swine did eat," and with which the spendthrift swineherd "would fain have filled his belly,"‡ were (Greek, *keratia*) the locust-like pods of the carob, the *kharub* of the Arabs, the

carouba of the Italians. The tree is a noble one, refreshing the eye with its symmetry, and affording a goodly shade with its dense, dark-green foliage. In April the trees are loaded with pods six, eight or ten inches long; these pods are gathered and are sold in the bazaars, chiefly for food for cattle and hogs, but

* Mark i. 6; Matt iii. 4.

† Lev. xi. 22.

‡ Luke xv. 16.

they are also eaten by men in straits for better food. They are now sold in our American cities by our fruiterers as a curiosity, so that their sweetish flavor is known to many. Eating them is all well enough as an amusement; eating them for sustenance, for breakfast, dinner and supper, is quite another affair. The Latin authors, "Horace and Juvenal, speak of



FRUIT OF THE CAROB TREE.

the pods of the locust tree as the food of the very poorest and most miserable, as in

the parable our Lord represents the prodigal, when reduced to the most abject misery, fain to fill his belly with the husks which the swine did eat—a type of the sinner who has wandered from God and has to be content with the unsatisfying husks of this world's enjoyments." *

Here and there the laborers in the fields give life to the scene, but you will often travel far and see scarcely a human being, unless it be a

QUAIL.

gunner wandering in pursuit of quail, which are abundant now, or of the larger game, the Greek partridge, which makes so welcome an addition to the traveler's larder. This fine bird, the *Caccabis saxatilis*, is found all

* Tristram's *Natural History of the Bible*, p. 367.

over Palestine. It has an interest to us as the bird to which David likened himself when pursued by Saul,

"for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains."* It runs with great rapidity, and is often hunted down by men with clubs as it doubles and dodges amid the rocks and stones.

GREEK PARTRIDGE.

Here and there, on the slopes of the hills, stand the miserable homes of the Bedouin Arabs, tents of black goats'-hair cloth. The tattooed women stare at us listlessly, the men lounge among their goats and dogs, while the children cry "Bakshish! bakshish!" Alas for the poor Bedouin! They strongly remind us of our American Indians. Their faults are many, their friends are few.

A pleasanter train of thought is started by the sight of the towns and villages to which we look up on the terraced hills of Lebanon, where our missionaries are at work, where schools have been established, where industry, honesty, purity and faith are taught, where converts have been made, where the young are guided into godly lives, where men are arising to aid in the regeneration of their own Syria. Abeih, Deir el-Komr, Schweifat and other points are names of good

* 1 Sam. xxvi 20.

omen for the future; in them the "seed of the word" is bearing its own fruit.

But we have been four hours on the way, and the river Dâmûr, the Tamyras of the ancients, is before us, crossing our path to unite its bright fresh waters with the Salt Sea on our right. It dashes down the gorges of the Lebanon, at times a furious torrent; the ruins of a stone-arched bridge on our left bear witness to its force when swollen. But now it is easily fordable. We cross it and dismount on its southern side, amid a clump of gayly-flowering oleanders, for our noonday rest. There is not much shade, but we nestle like the partridges under the oleanders, and are partially sheltered and refreshed. Our luncheon is brought out from the big saddle-bags. An Arab goatherd is here with his goats; so Mr. Eddy bargains with him for a supply of milk; he leads up to us a large black goat, plants his own head square against its rear and rapidly milks a copper vessel full. Of the reality of that milk there could be no question; as to its flavor—that, it must be admitted, would be a matter of taste. Perhaps with a little longer space between the milking and drinking it would have been less goatish and more acceptable to our palates.

Beyond the river the rocks run down from the hills to the sea, forming the Râs* Dâmûr. Having crossed this bold promontory, with its rock-tombs, mutilated sarcophagi and masses of loose stone, all the marks of an ancient city, we came out upon another charming bay. Here stands a poor little village, with orchards of fig and mulberry behind it, and clumps of

* *Râs*, head, promontory, cape.

tamarisk and palm. Here too is a little Moslem wely, or saint's shrine. The village is Neby Yûnus, "Prophet Jonah," and the wely is his shrine. Tradition tells us that Jonah, when disgorged by the great fish, was cast ashore just here. Certainly this pretty beach is a fair place for such an event, whether it happened here or not. And as the ship of Tarshish would be likely

NEBY YÛNUS—SHRINE OF THE PROPHET JONAH.

to sail this way on its voyage from Joppa, we need not discredit the claims of the site even if we do not zealously maintain them.

Let it be noted, in passing, that there are "great fish" in the Mediterranean, and "whales," too, if it be desirable to identify the whale with the "sea-monster" of the Hebrew which swallowed Jonah. The great white shark of these waters would perhaps answer

best for the event; but when in Beirût we saw the skeleton of a whale thirty-eight feet in length, recently cast upon the beach; its vertebræ were then drying on the roof of an out-building of the Protestant college. A few years ago a much larger whale—sixty feet in length, we were told—was stranded near Tyre.

The old Roman military road, which was laid solidly in concrete, is plainly to be traced all along the coast. In some places it still holds to its solidity, but in most places your horse prefers to quit this historic but dilapidated causeway for the earth at its side or for the beach. So now we start off and gallop along the beach; we cross another promontory whose rocks are lashed by the surging waves below us, and far away, on a jutting point, white Sidon shines in the distance against the blue of sky and sea. But we must cross the river Auwaly (often written *Owe-ly*)* before we enter Sidon. It is crossed by a one-arched bridge a little farther inland, but we keep on along the

SIDON, FROM THE NORTH.

beach, ford its stream, ride in at the gateway of the khân on its southern bank for a glimpse of what might be there, and then press on to the city, which looks

* Anciently, the Bostrenus.

still more attractive as we draw nearer to it. A wide stretch of orange-groves is on our left as we keep along the beach; we pass under the arched gateway, into vault-like streets, through dirty bazaars, and

SÂIDA, THE MODERN SIDON, FROM THE NORTH,
With the castle connected by arched causeway with the city.

speedily, alas! does the distant beauty of Sidon, with the fragrance of its orange-orchards, give place to the dark ways, the filth and odors of a Syrian town.

But we are to go to Mr. Eddy's home. Following his leadership, we stop in front of a door opening flush upon the narrow street. Entering, we find that the first floor is for the horses, and that we are to mount a flight of steep stone steps to the floor on which their masters dwell. Here is an open central court, having

for its floor the mortared ceiling of the first story. Rooms open on this court for the missionary, the school-teacher, the guests and the dining-hall. These rooms are matted, have rudely-made wooden doors and barred windows; their walls are of the plain white plaster, with the brown joist displayed above. Very modest and very simply furnished are these apartments, but I entered them with reverence, for here have dwelt godly men and women, devoting their lives to the work of bringing gospel light, holiness and joy once more to this land consecrated by the footsteps of martyrs, of apostles and of the Lord of martyrs and apostles.

The mission-house was occupied at the time of our visit by Mr. Eddy, whilst ten minutes' walk away, in the very heart of this close-built city, was the female seminary, where his sister, Miss Eddy, gives her life to the training of Arab girls for teachers in the towns that dot mountain and plain. Missionaries better fitted for their work it would be hard to find. They are in the home of their childhood, understanding the language and temper of the people, and capable of doing for them at once what it costs others half a lifetime to learn how to do.

But the sun is setting, and we will go to the flat housetop that we may look out upon the modern Sâida.

How difficult it is to imagine as standing here the proud Zidon of three thousand years ago! Yet the sight to-day is one of great beauty. The little city of ten thousand people is compactly massed within its walls, with the blue Mediterranean before it and rich

gardens of fruit trees sweeping in a curve about it landward, whilst back of them rise the hills of Lebanon, height above height, with many a village and many a grove of mulberry and olive. One ruined castle crowns the high ground in the rear of the city; another stands amid the waves, connected with the northern end of the town by an arched causeway. Vessels of small tonnage ride in its harbor or are sheltered under the lee of the rocky reef which rises a little beyond it. Form and color combine in rich variety to make a picture on which the eye rests with delight, whilst the ear catches the low music of the sea, now surging softly on sandy beach and rocky islet.

Sidon's history stretches back into the earliest recorded times. So long ago as when the combined armies of the Canaanites were chased from the Waters of Merom by Joshua, thirty-three centuries since, they took refuge behind its strong walls. Even then it was called "Great Zidon." * But even before this it finds mention in the oldest written record of the world's history,† where we learn that it took its name from Sidon, the son of Canaan, the grandson of Ham, the great-grandson of Noah. And when it appears in history it appears as the centre of skilled workmanship in the arts. In the days of the great Solomon it was the men of Sidon who had the skill to hew and carve and fit the fragrant cedar of their own Lebanon for the temple that arose in glorious beauty in Jerusalem. So also does the Greek Homer, in his *Iliad*, show his appreciation of its eminence in the arts, for

* Josh. xix. 28.

† Gen. x. 19.

when the Trojan hero, Hector, bids his mother offer to the goddess Pallas Minerva the "fairest robe in all the house" to secure her favor for the Trojan arms—

"She, meanwhile,
Her fragrant chamber sought, wherein were stored
Rich garments by *Sidonian* women worked.

* * * * *

Of these, the richest in embroidery,
The amplest and the brightest, as a star
Refulgent, placed with care beneath the rest,
The queen her offering bore to Pallas' shrine."*

So, too, in the games attendant on the funeral of Patroclus, celebrated without the walls of Troy by the investing Greeks,†

"The prizes of the runners, swift of foot,
Achilles next set forth, a silver bowl,
Six metres its content, for workmanship
Unmatched on earth, of *Sidon's* costliest art
The product rare."

In shipbuilding also Sidon excelled, and it was on one of her ships, the historian tells us, that Xerxes sat when he reviewed the fleet with which he invaded Greece. Returning to the Scripture history, we find that when Paul sailed from Cæsarea for trial at Rome in a "ship of Adramyttium," the vessel stopped at Sidon, and the centurion Julius "courteously entreated Paul and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself."‡

Tyre looked back to Sidon as its mother-city, but

* Lord Derby's translation of the *Iliad*, book vi.

† Ibid., book xxiii.

‡ Acts xxvii. 3.

the daughter in time outgrew the mother, and cast off her rule ; and then came conflicts for maritime supremacy, such as those that arrayed Genoa and Pisa on the Italian coast against each other in deadly rivalry. But Sidon has been so often taken and destroyed that absolutely nothing of the metropolis of ancient days remains, save the multitudinous tombs upon the plain behind it, and columns of Egyptian granite worked into mediæval walls, tokens of ancient wealth and commerce. Yet the Sâida of to-day can boast its petty commerce, for small vessels come and go to and from its poor harbor, and it is yet on the route from Egypt to the North. As we look down from the housetop, nineteen camels in a train are entering the gate from the south.

But there comes the call to dinner, and we descend from memories of the past to realities of the present. With appetites sharpened by our long ride, we are ready to test the qualities of the bachelor missionary's table.

This important duty having been properly discharged, we visited the female seminary, noted its appliances for the training of Syrian village-maidens for usefulness in home, in school and in church, admired the economy, the good sense and the devotion with which they are cared for, and rejoiced that such an agency for good was to be found in Sidon. Then, turning again to our friend's home, we went weary but satisfied to rest in the "prophet's chamber," lulled to sleep by the murmur of the sea beneath our window.

CHAPTER XXXII.

IN AND ABOUT SIDON.

THE sun rose clear and bright over Lebanon, and soon shone hot upon the plain, although it was only April 19th; its full power will be felt in July and August. But a sea-breeze tempered it for us and made the day a pleasant one for riding; so, ordering our horses, we sallied out of the southern gate of Sâida for a good look at its environs. As we went out at the little port by the seaside our attention was attracted by a bank on our left composed of a vast mass of broken shells. Looking more closely, we saw that these shells were of the *Murex* family,* the shell from which was extracted the purple dye for which Sidon and Tyre were famed. The discovery was one of those little links, uniting the present with the historic past, which are a joy to the traveler in these old lands. This bank, thirty feet high, was part of a great mound of these shells, evidently thrown here after being crushed and the dye extracted from the shell-fish that had dwelt within. We took some of the shells as mementos. Was it from them that the purple tint came which made the robe of Andromache a fit-

* The dye was obtained from the *Murex trunculus* and *M. brandaris* of Linnæus.

ting gift from a prince to the fairest woman in Troy? Or did they impart their color to the fine linen carried from Egypt by the children of Israel and devoted to the service of the tabernacle of the King of kings? But these shells have long since lost their tongues; they cannot tell whether they gave beauty to some rich fool clad in purple or to the Holy of holies. But one thing they can do: by their mass they can give a hint of the sources of the wealth of this great centre of ancient industries.*

Well out of the city, we turned eastward, passing amid fields of ripening wheat and barley. A hasty ride over these broad harvest-fields would not suggest the fact, but we were traversing the site of ancient Sidon, which extended far beyond the limits of the Sâida of to-day. You have only to dig beneath the surface and the fact becomes evident. Drive the pick anywhere, and you come upon the ruins of houses; a quarry of building-stone lies ready for disinterment. Halt a minute just here, and you have the evidence of this assertion, for here is a "gang" of laborers—women, not men—at work digging out building-blocks of cut stone, but with a man "boss," of course, to oversee the toiling women. A little farther on we noted another interesting Orientalism—a man cultivating a field, pushing his spade into the soil, and two women, each with a rope tied to one side of the spade, pulling it out for him! This illustrates the extremest degree of Arab inventiveness.

But we ride on and find ourselves in a necropolis, a city of the dead of old Phœnicia. Tombs may be

* Sidon was great by its manufactures, Tyre by its commerce.

opened here in any spot, for the plain is all honey-combed with sepulchres. We descend into the rock cuttings, which are from ten to twelve feet below the present surface of the ground, and find the chambers cut in the solid limestone, where the rich and noble of Sidon were laid away in stone sarcophagi, each in its own niche. But treasure-seekers have broken the strong coffins and the dust of their occupants has been scattered. It would seem that nothing belonging to that guilt-laden race of Canaanites was to abide. Emerging from these cave-tombs, we mount again, and ride, still eastward and through the grain, to the hills that rise behind the city.

But stop a moment and you may get a living illustration of one of the Master's parables* by noting the tares growing amid the wheat. No doubt we had often looked upon fields of young wheat amid which tares were growing, but both tares and wheat were so little developed that the difference was not noticeable. Now wheat and tares were both nearly ripe, and the difference was immediately recognized. Gather a stalk or two of these tares (*darnel*), and you will see how unlike the poisonous weed is to the golden-headed wheat, though once so similar that it would have been unwise to attempt to separate them.

TARES—DARNEL.

Now ride on up the steep hill, and, stopping on its summit, turn westward, and you have a scene spread

* Matt. xiii. 25.

out before you that might delight the most exacting. Land, water and sky, hill, plain and city, harvest-fields and orchards,—all are here in glorious combination. Stand still and enjoy it. I wonder whether Jezebel—call her “Isabel” and how different is the sound!—the brilliant daughter of Eth-Baal, king of Zidon, was wont to ascend this hill and from the porch of a summer palace look out on all this beauty as the women of Sâida do to-day? Did the Persian monarch gaze from this point on the rich city he was about to grasp? Did the great Alexander of Macedon? Perhaps his Christian friends led Paul hither that he might have a view of their city and its rich environs. Whether they did or not, we will enjoy this scene and admire the goodness of God who has created such beauty and given us gladness in the apprehension of it.

Our eyes rest upon the view until it has penetrated the soul, and then we descend to the plain once more to visit “the gardens of Sidon;” which, however, are not gardens in the Western use of that word, but orchards, as we had noted at Beirût, Damascus and elsewhere in Syria. The waters of the mountain-stream that comes down from Lebanon north of the city are led in channels so as to dispense life to every part of the cultivated district, rivulets being guided to the roots of the trees, or, where needful, raised by Persian wheels and sent to them through stuccoed channels. The several properties are separated by alleys bordered with hedges of rank profusion, in which the arrowy cane, the climbing white rose, the flowering pea, the smilax and many a thrifty growth contend

for the highest place. Through these narrow, close-hedged alleys you ride, stooping and bending to avoid branch and thorn. The air is loaded with the rich fragrance of orange- and lemon-blossoms. Above the hedges you see the trees—apricot, pomegranate and quince—in blossom; orange and lemon, bearing both blossom and golden fruit, amid which the birds flit and sing. But the outside of an orange-grove awakens a very positive desire to be inside, and to this the courtesy of a Mohammedan gentleman invites us. We enter, leaving our horses without the gate; we walk beneath the trees; mats are spread for us, and we recline beneath a living canopy of green and gold. From amid the green of this canopy we pluck the golden fruit, as charming to palate as to eye. We roam capriciously from tree to tree and pick and eat. Certainly, oranges never seemed so delicious as those gathered from the sunny side of the trees in this Sidon garden. Nor was it a small gratification that the freedom of his bending trees was a pure courtesy of its Moslem proprietor, who took pleasure in thus showing hospitality to the friends of the well-known missionary.

The afternoon was given to a walk up and down the narrow, overarched streets of Sâida, amid the noises of the now familiar Syrian bazaar, with its traders sitting cross-legged in their cupboard-like shops, and artisans busily at work, with its donkeys and dogs, its shouts and cries; and then to a visit to the old fortress south of the city, and back to the harbor and out to the castle on the mole. All was full of interest, but how different is the Sâida of to-day from the

Sidon of long ago! The castle is a half ruin, but it is reared upon foundations of beveled stone-work that proclaim antiquity; its dilapidated walls have built into them the granite pillars and marble columns of old abodes of wealth. The Phœnician, the Greek and the Roman are gone, and their places are occupied by shabby Turkish soldiers who hang around the howadjis in hopes of the bakshîsh which they need more than they deserve.

The harbor is now shallow and poor. It is protected by a reef of rocks running out from the city

THE CASTLE AND HARBOR OF SIDON—MODERN.

on its northern side and by the arched causeway leading to the castle. At the time of our visit ten small schooners lay in it, and six more were moored under the lee of a rocky islet a little beyond the castle.

After our full day we came back to our home so

weary that we readily listened to our host's proposal that we try a Turkish bath. The mysteries of this process we will not unfold. Suffice it to say that we came out alive. Wrapped in soft towels, with turbaned heads, on wooden clogs that our feet might not be burned by the hot marble floor, we were led through preparatory gradations into the innermost abode of heat and steam. Water anything this side of scalding was a soothing lotion as we lay stretched upon the floor, in a steaming atmosphere, under the moppings, spongings, dashings and rubbings of the servitors of the bath. The return to an ordinary temperature was slow and grateful. When we lay again on the couches of the first apartment, swathed in light cloths, we were not quite sure whether to register our bath with the luxuries or the tortures of the East. It was both.

A Sabbath spent in Sidon gave us an opportunity to note with growing interest the good work which is carried forward there by our little mission force. The morning Arabic service in the church was conducted by Mr. Eddy, his sister leading the singing at the cabinet organ. The church-edifice is a neat building of cut stone in the very heart of the city, standing on ground which formerly was occupied by a Turkish court of justice. It was built mainly by the gift of an Englishman, whose sympathies were touched by personal observation of the spiritual needs of Sidon. A curtain dividing the hall into two parts, that the women might be out of sight of the men, manifested a prudent respect for Moslem ideas of propriety, or rather of decency. In Beirût foreign influence has so affected public opinion as to make this unneces-

sary, but the case is different in the more secluded Sâida. The congregation was composed of the converts to Protestantism residing in the city, with some from the villages—men who had suffered for Christ's sake, and whom it has cost something to confess him. They are "not many rich, not many wise, not many noble," as in apostolic days, but they are a nucleus about which will crystallize the advancing reform in the decayed Syrian churches, Greek and Maronite, and to which converted Mohammedans may come when the way shall be open for them to confess Christ and keep their heads on their shoulders. Many prominent men have attended the services of the church from time to time, and have been enlightened, but as yet it costs too much to come out and own their change of belief. Only three months before our visit three Protestant men were burned alive in a village not far from Sidon by the Metawîlehs, in retaliation for the marriage merely of a Metawîleh woman by a Christian man. One looks with deep respect upon the poor, plain people who endure odium and face persecution rather than refuse to acknowledge the truth. Their Arabic singing, though not melodious to Western ears, beyond all peradventure was acceptable to Him to whom it was addressed. The Arabic sermon, which conveyed little meaning to us, was heard with eager attention by them. The word of the Lord is precious to those to whom it costs so much.

At the afternoon service the sermon was replaced by an address on experiences in mission-work in India by one of the guests, translated into Arabic by

Mr. Eddy. The subject interested them greatly. Especially did they appreciate the story of the opposition and persecution which converts from Hindoo heathenism were forced to meet. Into this they could enter heartily. It was seeing in the experience of others what they were called to do and to endure; they felt stronger from learning that others were confessing Christ under the fires of heathen enmity and cruelty.

Our evening was pleasantly spent at the female seminary. In this Christian home, surrounded by so much darkness, one could feel as well as see what the Bible does for our social life. Heartily do we pray that the light which there shines may be borne to many a village and many a home in Syria, through those who are there trained for future labors amid their own people.

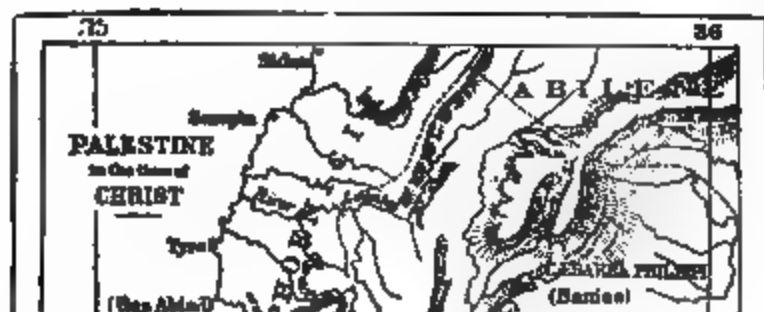
CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE COASTS OF TYRE AND SIDON.

THE morning was bright with Syrian sunshine as we left Sidon by its southern gate for a ride to Tyre. On our right the blue waters of the Mediterranean were flashing on the beach; on the left sloped the Phœnician plain up to the hills over which the mountains of Lebanon lifted their rugged brows. Our horses were fresh after the Sabbath's rest, and so were the pilgrims who rode them. The novelty of the way and its historic associations quickened our eagerness for the day's journey. Mr. Eddy was still our conductor.

The Bay of Sidon was soon left, and an avenue shaded by feathery tamarisks and by terebinths traversed. Then another bay was on our right; another jutting point was crossed, and again a curving crescent of beach gleamed white before us. Phœnicia was now looking its best. The plain was green with ripening wheat, or with lupines whose beans the women were busily gathering. In other fields—unseparated by fence or hedge—the ploughmen, in Eastern garb, followed one another in single file, each cutting his furrow, five, six or seven of them

in line. After the ploughmen came the blue-robed women dropping seed-beans into the opened furrows. The whole scene was purely Oriental and scriptural, transporting us to the days when Elisha left his plough to follow Elijah. But how great the change since then !



for now we are treading over and among heaps of loose stones that then were in the buildings of some prosperous city. Indeed, this whole coast was a line of towns, a hive of industry, of trade and of wealth, in those days when Tyre was the Venice of the known world, enriched by the commerce of the nations.

There is a promontory before us, jutting boldly out into the sea, and sloping at its point in a gentle decline. We have noticed it since leaving Sidon, for it shuts out from view the coast beyond. A little town

lodges high up the hill, built thus back from the sea when pirates ravaged the coast and Bedouins scourged the plain, driving dwellings to the safer mountains. It is Sarafend, the modern representative of that "Zarephath which belongeth to Zidon," to which the prophet Elijah was bidden to go when the waters of Cherith had dried, and of the "Sarepta" of which Christ spoke. When the Master visited the "coasts of Tyre and Sidon" did he enter Sarepta? It is not at all unlikely that he did. Here he may have rested, and then turned eastward, through the pass opening in the hills on our left, to the valley of the upper Jordan, and so southward to the Sea of Galilee. Near this very spot he may have met the Syro-phœnician woman to whom he said, "O woman, great is thy faith."

But the point is not yet gained, though it is in sight. Onward we ride—sometimes by the beach, over which a surf is breaking as fine as that of Cape May, sometimes farther inland, over the stone-strewn way of the old Roman road. The sun grows hot, and we look with desire toward Sarepta. A pretty little promontory is crossed and a rill; then we ride under a sycomore which would have suited Zaccheus exactly, so low are its branches and so squarely across the road,* and now we stop to rest and make our noon-day meal at a fountain shaded by a goodly tamarisk a little north of Zarephath. We wonder whether Elijah came up where those men are ploughing, and just where it was that he met the widow whose slender

* It is not the buttonwood, or plane tree, popularly known as the sycamore in America, but a syco-more, or fig-mulberry, bearing a fig-like fruit, but coarse and insipid, immediately upon its branches.

store was made by God's kind providence to last as long as the prophet dwelt beneath her roof. We cannot fix upon the spot, but this is that same Zarephath, or rather the ground upon which it stood, and we look upon it lovingly for the sake of its past.

The belief in miracles still lives in this land, for as we rest beside the fountain a priest of the Greek communion comes up, having in his charge three blind girls whom he is conducting from Tyre to near Beirût, where an impostor professes to heal the sick. Poor things! It grieved us to know the disappointment in

SYCOMORE (*Ficus sycomorus*), BRANCH AND FRUIT.

store for them. Weary and footsore pilgrims, too, returning to Beirût from Jerusalem, stop to refresh themselves at the fountain. They have walked all the long, rough way from Beirût to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem back to this Ain el-Kantara—women, young

and old men, and one little boy who looks so worn out with this long tramp that we are comforted to know that he is so near his home. Poor things! They have seen "the holy places," but as for holiness, that is another matter. They beg food from us, and

TAMARISK TREE (*Tamarix gallica*).

then move on to the north. We too rise, and, leaving the shade of our feathery-leaved tamarisk, move southward over the plain. The piles of stone strewn over its surface make it evident that Zarephath was a city of large size. Now not a house or wall remains. What has not been carried away for building-material or to burn for lime lies strewn in shapeless ruin on the ground. Leaving the Plain of Sarepta, we turn in from the beach and pass over the undulating coast, noting from time to time in the fields marks of the towns with which it was dotted two thousand and more years ago. Back on the hills are the Arab vil-

lages, where the tillers of the soil now dwell. Bedouins too pitch their poor black tents and live in ignorant poverty beside the road.

The river Leontes, coming down from the valley of the Bukâ'a, between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, where it is called the Litâny, here crosses the plain as the Nahr el-Kâsimîyeh, and flows full and strong into the sea. We cross it on an arched bridge, pass a ruined castle, and push on to Tyre, which has long been in sight, standing amid the waters on a cape connected by a neck with the mainland. Its island is not an island now. In twenty-two centuries the sea-sands have accumulated around the causeway cast up by Alexander the Great in his unsparing prosecution of its siege, so as to make of it a broad sandy neck. The great city that stood on the mainland has disappeared. The city that stood on the island, too, has disappeared, as God declared it should by the mouth of Ezekiel. The mean little town-that has risen on its ruins is not the Tyre of which God said, "They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus and break down her towers. I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock." * That Tyre has long ceased to exist. It is amazing to note how absolutely a vast city, a city of magnificent temples and palaces, of grand bulwarks and towers, can be made to disappear. Nothing but unquestionable history could make one believe that this broad plain, which now is waving with ripening wheat, was once covered by the buildings of a city, and that the cape which adjoins it was an island, crowned by a battlemented mart of com-

* Ezek. xxvi. 4.

merce, which it cost the world-conquering Nebuchadnezzar thirteen years to take, if, in fact, he took it at all—a point on which history is in doubt.

But the sun is setting over the glittering waves of the Mediterranean, and the trio of pilgrims are ready

MODERN TYRE.

for rest. Following our leader, we cross the sand neck which covers Alexander's causeway and pass within the arched gateway of the modern town. Through the dark, narrow, ill-paved streets, where the traders sit cross-legged on their counters and the Syrian dogs lie sluggish on the stones, we follow our guide, then we cross an open square, turn a corner into a narrow street, and are at our lodging-place. It is the house of the native teacher of a mission-school. We leave our horses to the attendant, and mount

to the second story, are in the court of the house. Here we are met with courtesy and dignity by the teacher's wife (a graduate of the Beirût female seminary), whose husband chances to be absent. We are invited into the teacher's room, a square apartment of good size, with a divan suggestive of rest on two of its sides, and a table in its centre. Water and towels refresh us outwardly, and in due time a dinner, rather of modern than ancient Tyrian style, refreshes us inwardly.

Callers now begin to come in to see Mr. Eddy, and long is the converse in Arabic. We sit on the divan and look as wise as the circumstances will permit; which is not *very* wise, I fear. In fact, our eyelids grow heavy, and we ask our inner intuitions how long Arabic queries can be put to a missionary. At last, a fair opportunity opening, Mr. Eddy reads from the Arabic Scriptures, prays in Arabic whilst all reverently stand, and the callers, with many a salaam, take their leave.

Forlorn as it is, the modern Tyre, at least in the spring-time, has an atmosphere of brightness which suggests what it might be under a decent government and with a Christian people. Alas that it possesses neither now! A few souls have come out of darkness and confessed Christ; the mass are followers of Mohammed or of the ignorant priesthood of a debased Church. The mission-school, supported by the British Syrian Society, is a little candle burning in the darkness. The school-room is occupied for preaching by the native teacher on the Sabbath, and at intervals by the missionary. The effect of Christian training on woman was strikingly noticeable in the teacher's wife, who also teaches the girls—her bearing presented

so strong a contrast to that of the women around her. It was free without boldness, modest without a weak diffidence. Then, too, we were much taken with her little Fareédy. This little one of six was her mother's pride. I trust she will not be spoiled. She recited to us the Lord's Prayer, in Arabic not only, but in English also, answered questions in the Shorter Catechism in English, sang in both languages, and read in both; and she was but six years old!

Of course we visited the schools in the morning. As the children came in they kissed our hands, and then bore them respectfully to their foreheads. When all were assembled the teachers examined them and led them in hymns, much to our satisfaction, although our competency in Arabic examination is not beyond question, I admit. Yet it did our hearts good to see these Arab boys and girls, some Moslems, some nominal Christians, brought under such influences. Oppressed as these poor people are by their vile rulers, and led astray by false teachers, they may well claim our sympathy, our prayers and our aid.

With deep interest did we walk over the old island, without the walls of the present town, now green with patches of young wheat or weed-grown hillocks. Where it faces the sea it has a sharp rocky front, and in the shallow water below columns of marble and granite lie thick under the washing waves. The harbor, to which the navies of the Mediterranean resorted, is choked with the ruins of the palaces of merchant-princes and of the temples and battlements of the once mighty and luxurious metropolis. In it, at the time of our visit, six small coasting-vessels were

sheltered, whilst a few others were anchored outside of the ruined mole by which it is protected on the north. In our walks we found the literal accomplishment of old-time prophecy, for the "nets of fishermen" were spread to dry where once stood the ramparts of Tyre.* The vain-glorious city that defied

THE HARBOR OF TYRE AS IT NOW IS.

God has been overthrown, cast down by his just vengeance; the oppressor has met her righteous doom.

The story of Tyre is too long to be told here. Her antiquity, her rise, her magnificence and power, fill a large space in ancient history. Her strength and wealth, her sieges by Assyrian and Persian, her capture by Alexander the Great of Macedon, are eras in history. After the capture by Alexander, who tore

* Ezek. xxvi, 14.

down the city on the mainland and cast it into the sea to form a way of approach to the island, Tyre ceased to be an island and became a peninsula; but it did not cease to be a place of importance. It will be remembered that the apostle Paul visited it on his way to Jerusalem (about A. D. 60), and finding disciples there tarried with them seven days,* and then was lovingly conducted out of the city by them, with their wives and children. "And we kneeled down on the shore and prayed," writes his companion Luke; "and when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship, and they returned home again." It continued to be a strongly-fortified and rich city down to the days of the crusaders, by whom it was captured in 1124, and held for one hundred and sixty-seven years. But from that sad day, in March, 1291, when the Franks sailed away from the homes and marts of the double-walled city, to this day, Tyre has been under the Crescent. It dwindled to nothingness, and desolation brooded over the place where the mistress of the seas once sat enthroned. In the fifteenth century a few poor fishermen, hiding in the vaults of its former palaces and spreading their nets on its rocks, were the sole occupants of the spot where once stood imperial Tyre. Ruskin opens his *Stones of Venice* with a word of warning to England from the fate of Tyre, which America would also do well to heed: "Since first the dominion of men was asserted over the ocean, three thrones, of mark beyond all others, have been set up on its sands: the thrones of Tyre, Venice and England. Of Tyre, the first of

* Acts xxi. 3-7.

these great powers, only the memory remains; of the second, the ruin; the third, which inherits their greatness, if it forget their example, may be led through prouder eminence to less-pitied destruction. The exaltation, the sin, and the punishment of Tyre have been recorded for us in perhaps the most touching words ever uttered by the prophets of Israel against the cities of the stranger. But we read them as a lovely song, and close our ears to the sternness of their warning; for the very depth of the fall of Tyre has blinded us to its reality, and we forget, as we watch the bleaching of the rocks between the sunshine and the sea, that they were once 'as in Eden, the garden of God.' " The prophet Ezekiel, in chs. xxvi., xxvii., xxviii., gives remarkable pictures of the prosperity of Tyre, with prophecies of her downfall. He personified the city as a noble ship (yet a city) drawing her mercenaries from Persia and Africa, filled with rich commodities from Greece, Armenia, Persia, Syria, Palestine and Arabia, puffed up with pride and self-confidence, yet to be utterly cast down. How completely have these prophecies been fulfilled!

The modern town has risen in comparatively recent times. It has about three thousand inhabitants (some say five thousand), and occupies the north-western corner of what was the island. The export of the cotton and tobacco grown in its neighborhood, with the small traffic called for by those passing up and down the coast, gives it its support.

About three miles south of Tyre the traveler finds almost the only remaining witness to the existence of a great city on the mainland—the Palæ-Tyrus, or

"Old Tyre," of the ancient historians. Here is the Râs el-Ain of the Arabs, "The Fountain-Head," from which that city derived its water-supply. The water, bursting in magnificent springs from the earth, was collected in stone reservoirs which still stand brimming full, but the aqueduct by which it was conducted to the city and distributed to its suburbs is broken and dry. The precious streams flow into the

TYRE—AQUEDUCT, WITH MILL AND SEA.

Mediterranean to mingle with its brine, unused, save that they turn the wheel of a mill near the shore. There is something impressive in noting the stalagmitic limestone rock, from ten to sixteen feet in thickness, which has been formed by the calcareous deposit from the water which has leaked from the seams of the aqueduct. How venerable are the ruins whose age

has given time for the formation about them of these rocky deposits!

From Tyre we made a day's excursion to the last site which we were to visit in this land—the Râs el-Abiad, or "White Cape" of the Arabs, the Promontorium Album of the Latin writers. Following the waving coast of the Mediterranean for two and a half hours, we reached a place where the white limestone cliffs of the Lebanon range thrust themselves boldly across the plain and into the sea. The rocks rise precipitously from the blue water which dashes with hollow reverberation against their base two hundred feet below. The highway from north to south must needs pass over this promontory, for not one foot of space is there between cliff and sea. The road mounts the dizzy precipice, in some places by actual steps cut in the white rock. It is indeed a veritable stairway, justifying the title of *Scala Tyriorum*, "Tyrian Stairway," by which it has long been known. Over these steps our Syrian horses clamber with steady nerves, while we enjoy the glorious outlook upon the matchless blue of the Mediterranean, flecked here and there with white-winged vessels. We remember that the crusaders passed over this stairway to rescue the sepulchre of their Lord from the clutch of the Moslem, that Roman armies, that the hosts of Alexander of Macedon, that, long before Alexander, the Pharaohs of Egypt and the Assyrians, tramped to war, to victory or defeat, in either case to death, over these glistening stones. Apostles, and confessors too, trod this path under the hot sun. What could not these rocks tell had they but tongues?

Down the other side our horses step and slide until the plain is reached, over which we gallop to Iskanderiyeh (the Arabic form of Alexander), where it is said that the great Macedonian monarch pitched his tent during the siege of Tyre. Here we tarry beside a fountain and under the shadow of a ruined wall for our noontide rest. We have reached the limit of our southward travel along the Phœnician coast; so, crossing again the Tyrian Ladder, we ride northward, stop for a bath in the rolling surf of a pretty bay, gather shells on the shore, and close the excursion with a most unclerical but gloriously exhilarating race over the beach that skirts the approach to Tyre.

Enough of the day was left for a row with an Arab crew about the harbor. The wharf from which we

entered the boat was built of columns of costly granite laid horizontally — tokens of the grandeur of old Tyre. Passing out of the harbor, we found in the face of the sea-wall one massive stone bearing marks of antiquity, but a second

GREAT STONE IN SEA-WALL OF TYRE.

we did not see, so thoroughly have the buildings of this Venice of the olden world passed away.

Little Faréedy and her mother accompanied us in

the boat, and the child carried us in thought far away, to little ones of another clime and tongue, by her singing of an Arabic version of the familiar

“There is a happy land, far, far away.”

The dear little ones! How closely do they link those chains of sympathy and love with which we all delight to be bound! God be thanked for the children!

The morning comes, brilliant with sunshine, and now back to Beirût! We pass out at the north gate of Tyre to ride up the Phœnician coast, turning ever and anon for one more view of the city, so mean within, but so fair in the distance, reflecting the morning light from its houses and the vessels at anchor in its port. Country-women are coming in to the town, bearing on their heads great baskets piled with vegetables, with fruit or with charcoal. Clad in red robes girt up to their waists, and in baggy blue pantaloons, they walk erect with swift, strong strides. Men bear loads of brush and wood to feed the furnaces that warm the public baths; the artisans and the tradesmen are already at their posts.

Again we cross the deep, steady Kâsimiyeh by its arched stone bridge, and turn aside to visit old Phœnician grottoes whose inscriptions tell of the worship of Baal and Astarte. Farther on Hermon's glorious crown of snow comes in view, rising above the lower mountains; Sarepta is reached; the azure sea invites us to a bath in its surf; Sidon is gained, and again we enjoy the hospitality of our friends.

In the morning we bade farewell with sincere regret to them and to Sidon, and rode on, over plain and

shore and rocky headland, to Neby Yûnus, across the river Dâmûr, on to the red sandhills of the Râs Beirût, through the mulberry-orchards and olive-groves, and into the city, to be welcomed again by our kind entertainers, Dr. Eddy and his family.

And now our "Ride through Palestine" was ended. A few days were pleasantly and profitably spent in Beirût, learning more of its mission and educational works and of the noble men and women who are carrying them on; and the hour came for leavetaking and embarkation. The lovely Bay of Beirût was left, and the goodly Lebanon faded from our sight. Even with Ephesus and Athens and Corinth in expectation, scenes linked with apostolic labors and apostolic lives, it was a sad hour when the land in which the Master lived and labored was lost to view. But a better "Land of Promise" is before us, and a new Jerusalem, a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. There may reader and writer meet, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, to go out no more for ever!

FAREWELL!

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THE END.

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